

Charu Chintan
(Beautiful Reflections)

By

Swami Akhandanand Saraswati

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Part I.

BHAKTI.

Some special features of the Bhakti Darshan.

Chapter 1.

The *brahmabhaavaapatti* (the feeling of being the Brahman) of the *jeeva* (the Atma attached to a body; an individual) is Mukti (freedom from all worldly concerns). The *jeeva* is *abhinna* (not separate) from the Brahman, so what is the *baadhaa* (obstacle) in the Atma turning into the Brahman?

The fact is that the *sansaara* (interactive world) of the *jeeva* – including birth and death – is not its intrinsic nature. It is because of the *upaadhi* (a superimposition connected to something. In this case, the superimposition of perceived individuality) of the *antahkarana* (the fourfold mind composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclination, and *ahankaara* = the subtle ego of individuality) that is ruled by the three *guna* (tendencies) of Sattva, Raja and Tamo gunas. The Sattva guna is a lofty tendency that gives right thinking and peace. The Rajo guna is a mixed tendency that gives restlessness, and the Tamo guna is a lowly tendency that gives deluded thinking and sloth. It is like a clear crystal that looks red because of a red hibiscus placed behind it. The gunas affect the antahkarana in the same way.

In the opinion of Bhakti Darshan (the school of thought that believes in the principle of Bhakti – love for Bhagwan), Gnan (about the Atma and the Brahman being one, and the substratum of all that exists; and worshipping the Brahman in the form of the Ishtadev, a personal Bhagwan), is not enough to remove the *bhrama* (false understanding) that the world is real.

[When the *aaropya* – the influence of the superimposition – is not placed close, the illusion caused by it can be removed by Gnan. However, when the objects are like a crystal and a red flower that makes the crystal look red, Gnan does not remove the effect of its looking red.]

This bhranti can be removed only when the upadhi (attribute, of the antahkarana that makes the world seem real) is removed, or the connection between the upadhi and the world is removed. As long as the connection with the upadhi and the *upadhe`ya* (the one who has the upadhi) remains, the illusion of the reflection being a reality will remain, no matter how lofty the philosophical principle may be.

Give some thought to this: can the Paramatma, who is pure consciousness and pure existence, be destroyed by this bhranti? Can the Paramatma, who is the *sarva-sattaa* (substance of all existence) and *sfooranaatmaka* (the pulsation that energizes everything) be destroyed? Is it possible for the *abhinna sambandha* (the connection between two things that are actually one) of the upadhi and upadheya be removed?

Ultimately, it must be accepted that the removal of the upadhi is the only method of removing the bhrama. It is not possible to remove false understanding by obtaining Atmagnan (Gnan about the Atma). Some other method is required to destroy the upadhi.

What is that method?

It is Ishwara Bhakti (loving devotion for the Ishwara, the Brahman with attributes). Ishwara Bhakti is *alaukika* (divine; not of this world), and therefore, it cannot be obtained by the methods of *pratyaksha* (known through the senses), *anumaana* (estimation), etc.

Ishwara Bhakti is established through the Shrutis (verses or statements in the Vedas), *smriti* (the words of enlightened Mahatmas like Manu, who have heard the Shrutis), and *pramaana* (proved by the logic of the Vedas that negate everything transient).

The fourteenth chapter of the Gita explains that the three gunas – Sattva, Raja, and Tama gunas – are the cause of our bondage in this world. It also describes how Bhakti Yoga (attaching ourselves to Bhagwan through Bhakti) enables a

person to pass beyond the influence of the gunas, and obtain Brahmabhavapatti. Thus, Bhagwan Himself tells us how having bhakti can give Mukti (freedom from the cycle of rebirth) by making our antahkarana free of the three gunas, and merge into the feeling of being the Atma.

Is Atmagnan futile?

It may be questioned whether Gnan about the Atma serves any purpose. The answer is: Atma Gnan is not futile. It is useful in Bhakti, because it washes away the impurity of *ashraddhaa* (absence of shraddha; lack of faith). Gnan cannot remove the *adhyasa* (wrong supposition) of the nature of the upadhi of the antahkarana, because just as this upadhi is not experienced before a person obtains Gnan, it remains un-experienced even after a person obtains Gnan.

That means a person must have knowledge about the Tattva (essence; true form) that is beyond the *trigunaatmika* (of the three gunas) upadhi, to attain bhakti for Bhagwan. Gnan cuts away doubt – ‘*gnanasanchchinna sanshayam*’ (Gita). According to the Bhakti Darshan (the philosophy of Bhakti) this world is not created by *agnaana* (absence of Gnan). Had that been the case, it would definitely have been removed by Gnan. The cause of the sansara is *a-bhakti* (absence of bhakti). Therefore, removing a-bhakti by cultivating bhakti removes the sansara.

Paraa bhakti (the highest bhakti) is *jeevana-mukti* (obtaining Mukti in this very life).

It is written in the Vishnu Purana:

Taavadaartistu saa vaanchchaa tavanmohastathaa sukham,

yaavannaayaati sharanam tvaamashe`shaaghamochanam.

(Vishnu Purana 1. 9. 59)

‘O Prabhu! So long as this *jeevana* (life) of mine has not taken refuge in Your feet, which have the quality of removing *paapa* (sin) completely, I continue to suffer from *dukha* (sorrow) and *moha* (deluded thinking).’

It is said, further, 'The jeeva suffers with repeated births, tortures inflicted by the servants of Yama Raj (the presiding deity of Death, who punishes jeevas for their wrong deeds), different kinds of poverty, the terrible vision of Yama Raj, and the waters that have ripples of *mamataa* (possessive attachment), and *ahamataa* (the pride of individuality). A jeeva gets all these because he has become turned away from Bhagwan's lotus feet.'

*Janmaani ghorayamakinkarataadanaani dainyaani taani
tapanaatmapaatmajadarshannani,*

*jantorahamamatarangakurangatrishnaah
krishnaanighrapankajaparaanmukhataanubhavah.*

Apart from this, the *prapancha* (interactive world) is accepted as Satya (a truth that can never be negated) in the Bhakti *siddhanta* (principle of Bhakti) because it has been created by the Satya Parameshwara, and His Satya-Shakti (eternal power). This sansara is the *sankalpa* (resolve) of the Ishwara, and the Ishwara is Satya-sankalpa – His resolve is an eternal reality.

In the same way, the jeeva obtains *sukha* (happiness; complete content) etc through his antahkarana. Under the circumstances, Mukti is not obtained by Gnan alone; it is obtained by Bhakti.

It is worth noting that some Darshans (schools of thought) are *tvam-padaartha-pradhaana* (dominated by the tvam = you, the self, padartha = substance), for example, the Poorva Mimansa, Sankhya and Yoga. The first describes how the *kartaa* (doer; the one who has the subtle pride of having done the action) of the tvam-padartha (you, the individual) should do a *dharma-anushthaana* (ritual of instituted Dharma). There is no mention of the Ishwara in this. Whether the Ishwara exists or not, the ritual undertaken by the individual creates an *apoorva* (latent fruit that is bestowed in due course). This may be in this *loka* (world), or *paraloka* (a realm after death); in this lifetime, or in a future lifetime. This is a *bahiranga darshana* (a philosophy pertaining to the external world of the individual).

Sankhya Darshan is *viveka-pradhaana* – it is dominated by *viveka* (discrimination). It discriminates between the *drashtaa* (the one who sees) and the *drishya* (that, which is seen). Since this Darshan has only two divisions –

drashta and drishya – there is no special reference to the Ishwara. It frees the tvam-padartha from *kartritva* (the pride of being the doer).

The Yoga Darshan blocks the *chitta vritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts) and affirms the *svaroopavasthaana* (natural dwelling place) of the drashta. In the process of blocking the vrittis, the Ishwara – who is that *tat-padaartha roopa* (the form of the ‘tat’, meaning, ‘That’, the Brahman; padartha means substance) is described. However, once the vrittis are blocked the Ishwara is no longer required. Only the *saadhana* (method) of Samadhi is needed, and *vibhooti* (supernatural powers), and ultimately *kaivalya* (a state where there is no awareness of anything but the Self) remains. Kaivalya is always the tvam-padartha (the substance that is you, your Self). Therefore, the tvam padartha is predominant in these three Darshans.

The Nyaya and Vaisheshik Darshans establish the tat-padartha. The Bhakti Darshan mainly accepts the Parameshwara established by Nyaya and Vaisheshik, and explores the results of Bhakti. It is *shrouta* (of the Shrutis); therefore, it does not give importance to gross matter, atoms, particles, or any other substance. It only describes Bhagwan and Bhakti. This Darshan is also a tat-padartha Darshan. Hence, it is not like the Shankar-Vedanta (Vedanta as interpreted by Shankar Acharya), that establishes the oneness of the tat-padartha and the tvam-padartha, to declare that the Advaita Tattva (non-dual essence) to be the substratum of all that exists. The Acharyas (Teachers; Masters) who have established Bhakti Darshan in their own commentaries on Vedanta are a different matter.

The Bhakti Darshan does not accept that a person can become free of the sansara without developing bhakti for Bhagwan, because it is due to bhakti that the buddhi becomes immersed in bhakti. Therefore, in this *mata* (opinion) *aatmagnaana* (Gnan about the Atma) is not a remover of the sansara; it only serves the purpose of removing the impurities of the antahkarana – like *ashraddhaa* (absence of faith), *sanshaya* (doubts), etc.

A man takes a bath, grooms himself, and dresses in clean clothes when he goes to meet a Monarch. In the same way, the jeeva purifies his antahkarana before presenting himself before Bhagwan. He gives up *pramaada* (forgetting to do his duty), *aalasya* (indolence), *ashaanti* (mental agitation), *krodha* (anger),

lobha (greed), *audhatya* (rudeness; impertinence), *abhimaana* (arrogance; vanity) etc, because these are not *aatma-dharma* (the nature of the Atma). They are born from wrong association. Then the bhakta realizes his own pristine swarup, and takes refuge in Bhagwan. This is the purpose of Atmagnan.

Are the jeeva and the Brahman truly separate?

Right from the beginning, it has been stated that the brahmabhavapatti of the jeeva is Mukti. The question is, if the jeeva and the Brahman are actually separate, how can a separate jeeva become Brahmaswarup?

Regarding this, the viewpoint of the Bhakti Darshan is that the jeevas and the Brahman are not actually many; they are one. The multiplicity is because of their being connected to the separate upadhis (of different antahkaranas). When the upadhi is removed, they are one. The Bhakti Darshan accepts the Shruti, '*Sarvam khalvidam brahma*' (everything is only the Brahman). For example, the sun and the moon are reflected in the different vessels filled with water, in lakes and ponds and the sea; but they are one. Similarly, the Brahman seems to be many, because of the many upadhis. When *paraa-bhakti* (the highest level of bhakti) destroys the *upaadhi-buddhi* (the belief that the upadhi is real), the jeeva is the Brahman. Once the mirror or the water that shows the reflection of the sun or the moon is removed it becomes evident that the effulgence is that of the sun or the moon (Shankar Bhasya 3. 2. 1).

If it were to be accepted that the jeeva is separate from the Paramatma, and they are mutually separate from each other, that would not be proper. Accepting this does offer a satisfactory arrangement of the *baddha-mukta* (bound- free), but this assumption leaves no scope for there to be any relationship between the jeeva and the Paramatma. Can a relationship between the jeeva and the Ishwara be established in the form of the drashta and the drishya? Lamps that are already lit do not need each other. The Ishwara will become the *gne`ya* (that, which is known). The *prakaashya* (that which is illuminated) will become *jada* (inert matter). Therefore, it must be accepted that the *chidaatmaa* (conscious Atma) is the *jagata-prakaashaka* (illuminator of the world). This is established in the form of the *adhishtana*

(substratum) of the *bhrama* (false understanding) and *pramaa* (true perception).

It is a special point of the Bhakti Darshan that bhram and prama both exist in the buddhi; and buddhi is a real substance. When the buddhi goes through the process of *ananya bhakti* (single pointed bhakti) it becomes *brahmaakara* (the form of the Brahman). Then it merges into the Brahman, because the buddhi is *abhinna* (not separate; one) from the Brahman who is the object of worship. After that no doubt remains about the jeeva being the Brahman in essence.

Therefore, the cause of the birth and death of the jeeva is not *agnana* (absence of Gnan); it is *abhakti* (absence of bhakti). When a person gets bhakti there is no more birth and death for him. The fact is agnan cannot be the cause of any gross substance; it can only be the cause of mental delusion. (Shankar Bhasya 3. 2)

Are the buddhi and the *drishya prapancha* (perceived world) *mithyaa* (false)?

In the *saguna brahmavidyaa* (knowledge about the Brahman with attributes), the Parabrahm Paramatma is supremely magnificent and powerful. He is naturally endowed with any number of unimaginable powers. His supreme powers are absolute. This *sookshma-sthoola* (subtle-gross) prapanch abides in Him the way utensils are kept in the house, and things are kept in utensils.

There is a Shakti (power; energy) in the Brahman, and the *prapancha* (interactive world) is in His Shakti. The Shakti and the *shaktimaana* (one who has Shakti) combine to create the *jagata* (world). Therefore, in the view of the Bhakti Darshan, the *chaityaa prakriti* (conscious Prakriti; Nature that has consciousness) and the *chid-brahma* (the Brahman who is pure consciousness) are both Satya. No third object exists. (Shankar Bhasya 2. 1. 14)

The special viewpoint in this is, since it is the Shakti of the Brahman, the conscious Prakriti and her *vilaasa* (sport; play) are not mithya – *shaktitvaannaanritam che`tyam* (Shankar Bhasya 1. 2.16). The purpose of this is that just as the fire's power to burn is a form of the fire, the Shakti of the Brahman is also a form of the Brahman. This does not contradict the Advaita Shrutis (the verses of the Vedas on which the principle of the non-dual

Brahman is established) in any way, since the *abhe`da* (oneness; absence of separateness) of the Shakti and the Shaktiman, the *kaarana* (cause) and the *kaarya* (effect) are the purport of the *shrouta-advaita* (the principle of Advaita in the Shrutis).

Are the Vedas *paurushe`ya* (created by a human being)?

Three *pramaana* (proofs; methods of establishing something) are accepted in the Bhakti *siddhaanta* (principle of Bhakti). It is like the three eyes of Rudra (Shiva), and the three signs of the Virat (the Brahman in the form of the Universe) – the Surya (sun), Chandrama (moon) and Agni (fire). In the same way the Bhakti Darshan accepts the three pramans of *shabda* (words), *anumaana* (estimation), and *pratyaksha* (direct experience) (Shankar Bhasya 3. 2. 7).

The principle *prame`ya* (that, which is proved) of the Bhakti Darshan is the Parameshwara. Furthermore, this entire prapanch is not separate from Him, because everything is the swarup of the Shakti and the Shaktiman. The Shakti is *maayaa* (the Ishwara's power of illusion) and it is *jada saamaanya* (everything is inert matter, including the body). It is *nitya-gne`ya* (always known) and so it cannot be called mithya. Among everything that is *vaapya* (pervaded) there is only one *vyaapaka* (pervading factor), meaning, the Ishwara is the Creator and the root cause of this entire world. All the individuals' buddhis are in Him. It is not possible for this world to be created by the buddhi of any creature of this world. It is the Ishwara who creates this world of moving and unmoving objects; the living and the lifeless, according to the *dharma-adharma* (Dharma – that, which is contrary to Dharma) done by people. He also creates the Vedas for their good. Just as a father teaches his son what is good for him and what is harmful, the Paramatma also created the Shrutis for the jeeva to obtain the things they desire and reject the things that are harmful.

The Ishwara also gives the *fala* (fruit) of karmas. There is no difference of opinion regarding this in the Uttar Mimansa and Bhakti Mimansa philosophies. The Poorva Mimansa believes that karmas give their own fruits through the *apoorva* (latent fruit) they create, regardless of the existence or non-existence of the Ishwara.

The Bhakti Darshan is *eeshvara-pradhaana* (the Ishwara is the predominant factor in it). It says that the Ishwara punishes or rewards the jeeva the way a Raja punishes wrong-doers and rewards people he is pleased with. According to the Bhakti Darshan, if the Vedas are accepted as *anirmita* (not created) they will be a separate *sattaa* (something that can never be negated), independent of the Ishwara. This is not desirable in the principle of Bhakti. However, the meaning of the Vedas being *paurushe`ya* (created by a human) is definitely NOT that they have been created by any human being. The possibility of *bhram*, *vipralipsaa* (when a personal opinion influences the facts), *karnaapaatava* (misinterpreting something to be accomodating) and other *dosha* (faults) are always present in the jeeva. Therefore, in spite of being created by the Ishwara, the Vedas are as pristine and established as if they had been *apaurushe`ya* (not created; eternal).

Bhakti is *ve`dapratipaadya* (established by the Vedas).

Shandilya himself has said, '*bhakti prame`ya shrutibhyah, puraane`tihaasaabhyaam cha*' (1. 2. 9-10), meaning bhakti is established by the Shrutis, Puranas, and Itihasas. This means that the Ishwara ordered the Shrutis, who are His speech, that the swarup of Bhakti should be made known to all, through the Shrutis, Puranas (ancient works dealing with legends and mythology) and Itihasas (ancient historical sagas).

In his commentary on these *sootra* (aphorisms) Narayana Swami has given several mantras (groups of words that have subtle powers) from the Rig Veda as examples. *Naama-smarana* (remembering Bhagwan's name) *shravana* (listening to discourses on Bhagwan and understanding their purport), *keertana* (singing Bhagwan's name and songs about His frolics), *bhagavadarpana* (offering up everything to Bhagwan), *sharanaagati* (taking refuge in Him), *bhagvad prasaada* (offering food to Him and then sharing it as His blessing), etc are described. Not only is the Bhakti obtained through the sadhan and regular sharavan-kirtan described, but the different kinds of Bhakti – like *bhagavanmayee*, *raagaatmikaa*, and *rasamayee* – are also described.

The Rig Veda (6.1.5) describes the Paramatma as the mother, father, and protector. It also describes them with great bhakti (8.98. 11). It describes Indra as being higher than the father and also as a very superior friend. [Here, Indra

is Bhagwan; not the King of Swarga]. Some of the mantras express love like a wife embracing her beloved husband – *parishvajante` janayo yathaa patim* (10. 43. 1). The Rig Veda has reached the summit of bhakti, with the feeling of the jeeva being the lover and the Parameshwara the Beloved. It seems as though this is the seed of the upasana where the jeeva has the feeling of being someone else's wife, in love with the Paramatma!

What is Bhakti?

The purpose of all Bhakti schools is that when a person's deepest love is for Bhagwan, that is Bhakti.

Narad has said that supreme *pre`ma* (love) and its quality of being *amrita svaroop*a (the essence of amrita, the elixir that bestows immortality) is Bhakti. Shandilya has said that amrita (elixir) is the fruit of Bhakti. Angira has said that an excess of *sne`ha* (affection), prema, shraddha, and a divine attachment for the Ishwara is Bhakti.

In the Bhakti Mimansa written by unknown people, Bhakti is a special rapture of the *mana* (emotional mind). These Acharyas do not approve of Bhakti being called a feeling. In their opinion, Bhakti manifests with all the ingredients of *rasa* (sweet emotion) and therefore, it is a rasa. It is not created; it is a rasa that rises up involuntarily.

Swami Shri Hariharanandaranya believes Bhakti to be of two kinds. The bhakti in which a person experiences *sukha* (happiness and complete contentment) is the *aparaa* bhakti, and the bhakti in which a person experiences *shaanti* (complete mental peace) is the *paraa* (not worldly) bhakti. Para Bhakti comes from Apra Bhakti. Strong attachment for Bhagwan results in *vairaagya* (detachment; absence of raaga) for everything else. The mental focus is only the *bhajaneeya* (the one whose bhajan the bhakta does), and the person develops *nishthaa* (staunch faith) for Him. This is Para Bhakti, and it is only from this that a person can get *shaashvata* (eternal) shanti.

This Bhakti is not *gnaana-roopa* (a form of knowledge) because there is no rule that a person will have bhakti for someone about whom he has knowledge. Sometimes, you become averse to someone because you know about his wrong tendencies. Gnan is present in both raaga and dvesha. An *anuraagee*

(one who loves Bhagwan) has Bhagwan's *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) and he gets absolute *nishre`yasa* (release from rebirth).

The purport is that Bhakti has the capacity to fulfill all desires. Those who say that bhakti is a *kriya* (action) and that its fruit cannot be *ananta* (infinite; everlasting) are mistaken. Bhakti is not something that can be attained or acquired through personal effort. It is not possible to develop love for even a close relative or friend at will; it is always natural. How can Bhakti for the Ishwara be cultivated by force?

This is why the fruit of Bhakti is not something that can be created or destroyed. Like Gnan, it is present right from the beginning, and it manifests at the right time. It is not something that is created. Bhagwan Shri Krishna has described *prapatti* (surrender to Bhagwan) in the Gita.

Bahunaam janmanaamante` gnaanavaanmaam prapadyate`,

Vaasude`vah sarvamiti sa mahaatmaa sudurlabhah.

(Gita 7. 19)

After going through several births a person obtains Gnan about the essence of the Brahman. Then he realizes that everything is Vasudeva – the Atma who abides in all, and he worships Me in this manner. Such a Mahatma is extremely rare.

The fact is Dharma, Yoga, and Gnan need to be bolstered with Bhakti, to be strong. They have a need for Bhakti. The Gita also states that a bhakta (one who has bhakti for Bhagwan) is superior to a *karmee* (one who does rituals), a *gnanee* (one who has learning), and a Yogi. Wherever it is stated that a person obtains Gnan through Bhakti, it refers to bhakti for Bhagwan.

Some people say that raaga is a descendent of *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the world to be an eternal truth), but this principle applies only to raaga for worldly objects. Bhakti is raaga for the Parameshwara. If a person needed to do only *vritti nirodha* (stop all thoughts), or establish that the *drashtaa* (the Atma that is the pure consciousness in the individual; the one who sees) is one's own *svaroopaa* (essence; true form), this accusation – that Bhakti is the fruit of avidya – would have been justified. In Bhakti, the entire world,

including the buddhi, is immersed in the Parameshwara; and the Parameshwara is our own *abhinna-nimitta-upaadaana kaarana* (the cause that is not separate from the substance and the instrument this world is made from).

Therefore, raaga for the Ishwara – who is the most superior, and the cause of everything – is without any upadhi. This raaga is not connected to anything except Bhagwan. It becomes a cause of Moksha (release from rebirth). No raaga or *sanga* (association) is to be given up simply because it is an emotional attachment or an association. It is to be given up only when it is connected to this sansara.

Bhakti is not a part of Karma (rituals); it is not a part of any action or ritual, because *shraddhaa* (faith) is needed for any ritual done for obtaining Swarga (Heaven), etc. In places it is written, '*shraddhaa-bhakti-samanvita*', meaning, shraddha combined with bhakti. The Gita also says, '*shraddhaavaana bhajate*', meaning, a person who has shraddha worships Bhagwan.

The Distinguishing Qualities of Bhakti.

When refuting the principles of contradictory theories, and examining the principles of similar theories, we come to the conclusion that supreme love for the Ishwara is Bhakti.

However, supreme love is something that is self-experienced; no other can recognize it. That being the case, the obvious question is, how can we recognize Bhakti in someone?

- A. In the opinion of Vyasa, son of Parasara, *poojaa* (ritual worship) – using money, the body, and the mana – done lovingly, is a *lakshana* (characteristic; sign) of Bhakti. It manifests in the form of *se'vaa* (rendering service) to the object of a person's bhakti.
- B. In the opinion of Garga Acharya a person who has bhakti loves to hear about, and talk about Bhagwan, sing songs about Him, and chant His name.
- C. In the opinion of Shandilya Rishi, the sign that a person has bhakti is when he becomes engrossed by anything that is dear to his supremely beloved Bhagwan.

- D. Bharadwaj Rishi says, to be engrossed in *paramaananda* (supreme bliss), and describe the glory and greatness of the Parameshwara is Bhakti. That means, a person reveals the greatness of the One he loves.
- E. The opinion of Kashyap is that Bhakti is to offer up all one's actions to Bhagwan. This means, every action of a bhakta is done with the thought that it will be pleasing to Bhagwan. In this, there are no rules about the actions; it is bhakti to even take a bath in order to make yourself presentable to Bhagwan.
- F. Shri Krishna, Shukadev, Prahlad, Vasishtha, and other Rishis say that Bhakti is to consider the entire world to be a form of Bhagwan, and to render loving service to all as our worship to Him.
- G. Devarshi Narad says we should dedicate all that we do and say to Bhagwan. We should feel acute distress if we forget Him for even a little while.
- H. The people of Vraja (the area round Vrindavan) say that Bhakti is to immerse our *mati* (thinking; intellect), *gati* (actions) and *jeevana* (life) and *praana* (life spirit) to Bhagwan.

All these characteristics ultimately make a person immersed in Bhagwan. The upadhi of the antahkarana merges into the *abhinna-nimitta-upaadaana kaarana* (the cause that is not separate from the matter the world is made of or the instrument that makes it), the abode of all that is beneficial and benevolent, beyond imagination and infinite – the Parameshwara! All these are the pleasures of Bhagavad-bhakti (bhakti for Bhagwan).

How can Bhakti be Obtained?

There is no doubt that in the Bhakti *siddhaanta* (principle) the Ishwara is the all in all. The jeeva and the jagat are not separate from Him. That being the case, bhakti cannot be obtained unless Bhagwan, or His bhaktas who have become one with Him, bestow Grace on a person. It is beyond any person's capacity to earn this *anugraha* (Grace; compassion)

Therefore, *anugraha* cannot be included in the methods for obtaining spiritual progress. The only thing a jeeva can do is to await this *anugraha* with an eager heart.

A jeeva can certainly try to see this anugraha in every moment and in every grain. *Prateekshaa* (awaiting) and *sameekshaa* (seeing) is done by the jeeva, so they are included in the grade of sadhans. This is why Devarshi Narad has said that Bhakti is obtained by the great *kripaa* (Grace) of a Mahatma, or a touch of Bhagwan's kripa.

Carrying out your ordained duties and having a *nishkaama* (free of selfish considerations) attitude as your worship are the actions that are pleasing to Bhagwan. It is also a cause for Bhakti when a person practices Yoga to turn his mana away from worldly considerations. When a person uses *vinaya* (humbleness) and *dainya* (humility) to shrink his Aham (the subtle pride of individuality) the result is that Bhagwan manifests in his antahkarana.

The main point in the principle of Bhakti is that a person should give up indulging in sense objects and attachment for worldly objectives, and think continuously about Bhagwan. This results in Bhagwan's *svaroopa* (essence; true form) – which is filled with anand and rasa – appearing in the antahkarana. The bhakta's vrittis become *bhagavad-aakaara* (the form of Bhagwan). This is Bhakti.

The rasa is the Parameshwara. The vritti filled with rasa is Bhakti. Bhajan (loving meditation) means *rasaasvaadana* (savoring the sweetness of Bhagwan). It is rasasvadan in which the triad of the *bhoktaa* (the one who enjoys), the *bhoga* (enjoyment) and the *bhogyaa* (that, which is enjoyed) dissolves. No one knows what is enjoyed or who enjoys. To obtain such Bhakti, Angira Rishi has spoken about the *avalambana* (support) of seven *bhoomikaa* (bases).

- A. The *aashraya* (shelter) of Bhagwan's naam. Mantras are words that are connected to the *adhidaiva* (metaphysical; divine) world. The Poorva Mimansa goes so far as to state that in spite of there being no such thing called the Devta (a divine power), or *jaati* (caste; community), Devtas are created instantly as soon as the mantras are uttered.

However, according to the *upaasanaa* (of worship) Shastras, Devtas do exist. Different Devtas are worshipped through different mantras.

Bhagwan's name does not come within this category, however. His name is a special manifestation of Bhagwan Himself, for the *kalyaana*

(great good fortune; release from rebirth) of His bhaktas. His naam is the Brahman. The naam is what Bhagwan is. It is with this attitude that a bhakta takes refuge in Bhagwan's naam, and does kirtan, *japa* (ritual chanting), shravan, dhyana, *smarana* (remembering Him) etc, to draw Him into his heart.

Bhagwan Himself is present in the *naamaakaara vritti* (the mental inclination for taking His name); and the *preetmayee vritti* (loving thoughts) is Bhakti incarnate. The self-effulgent quality of the naam is also the self-effulgent quality of Bhakti.

B. The alamban of roop (the support of His beauty).

Although there is no intrinsic difference between Bhagwan's naam and His roop from the viewpoint of *saadhana* (method for spiritual progress), the naam comes into the sphere of karma and bestows kalyan. The roop comes into the sphere of Gnan and bestows kalyan.

Vaak (speech) is a *karme`ndriya* (organ of action), and *ne`tra* (vision) is a *gnaane`ndriya* (sense organ). From this viewpoint, the roop comes into the sphere that is more subtle than the naam. There is no doubt that the naam has the capacity to show the swarup of Bhagwan even without the help of His roop. Even so the naam is generally considered to be the *prakaashaka* (that, which illuminates) and the roop, the *prakaashya* (that, which is illuminated).

In the seeing of an external object the roop is the *prame`ya* (that, which is established) and the *ne`tra* (eye; vision) is the *pramaana* (proof). Similarly, in the realm of Bhakti the roop is the prameya and the naam is the *ne`trasthaayee* (seated in the eyes) praman. The roop will glimmer in your heart if you keep chanting the naam. Preeti (love) for the roop leads to *tanmayataa* (losing yourself in the roop). The upadhi disappears in tanmayata, and the person merges into Bhagwan. This is how the support of the roop results in the vritti of the antahkarana becoming immersed in the Parameshwara. When the upadhi is merged into the Paramatma, there is nothing left to differentiate between the Atma and the Paramatma.

C. Darshan of the *vibhooti* (a glimpse of Bhagwan's grandeur) and Yoga.

Yoga is to do *dhyana* (meditation) in the *hridaya* (heart), and vibhooti is to see everything in this world as filled with Bhagwan. Seeing Bhagwan

in both states (within and without) results in a person getting *avikampe`na yoga* (being connected to Bhagwan continuously). In this, it is necessary to see Bhagwan's vibhooti in every being, in every grain, and every moment. This kind of attentiveness makes the upadhi (of the antahkarana) engrossed, and the jeeva merges into Bhagwan.

D. Meditating on the fact that Bhagwan's Shakti is everywhere.

As described in the Gita, the effulgence of the Surya (sun) the soothing pleasantness of the Chandrama (moon), the power to burn in the Agni (fire) and all the other powers in Nature (Bhagwan's Shakti of Creation) are all the powers of the Parameshwara.

The *prithivee* (earth) supports, *jala* (water) gives flavor, *vaayu* (air) enables us to breathe, and the *avakaasha* (space) gives us scope for movement. All these belong to the Paramatma. By meditating in this manner – that all the gross and subtle powers belong to Bhagwan and are not separate from Him – the mana becomes immersed in the Paramatma.

E. Darshan of the gunas (a glimpse of Bhagwan's qualities).

In this world of name and form, everything that exists in the *vilaasa* (sensual pleasure) of Bhagwan's *chit-shakti* (power of consciousness) that is composed of the three gunas. Inert matter comes from Tamo guna, mixed tendencies come from Rajo guna and the effulgence of Gnan comes from Sattva Guna. All three are protected and controlled by Bhagwan. When the *drishti* (vision) of the jeeva rises beyond the influence of the gunas, and starts to see the *guna-aadhaara* (the one who supports the gunas), *guna-niyantaa* (the one who controls the gunas), *guna-prakaashaka* (the one who illuminated the gunas), *guna-upaadaana* (the substance the gunas are made of), *guna-vilaasee* (the one who enjoys the gunas) Parameshwara, all the gunas become merged into Him. The jeeva becomes *samaadhishttha* (immersed in deep meditation) in the *sa-guna* (with attributes) Ishwara.

F. The experience of the swarup (essence; true form).

It has been stated earlier that there is no actual difference between the swarup of the jeeva and the swarup of the Ishwara. The difference is perceived because of the upadhi of the antahkarana of the jeeva. When the oneness of the swarup is established in the buddhi, the buddhi does

not show the jeeva as separate. For a person in this state nothing remains, except Prabhu (Bhagwan) and Prabhu's Shakti. In this unchanging experience Samadhi and *vyavahaara* (interaction) are no different for a person who has attained this state.

It is said that every part of Bhakti is a sadhan as well as the *fala* (fruit). Bhakti, itself, is *falaroopaa* (the form of the fruit). This is the opinion of the Sanat Kumars, Narad, Shandilya, and others. Bhagwan is the fruit of all fruits. As soon as the vritti becomes one with Him, the person has bhakti. Regardless of how bhakti is obtained, the important factor is getting Bhakti, not the method.

The Ripening of Bhakti.

Just as the vrittis, 'I know', and 'I want this', are something a person is simply aware of, the vrittis, 'I am an *anuraagee* (one who loves)' and, 'I am a *se`vaka* (servant)' are also something a person is simply aware of. However, the conclusion that Bhakti has ripened in a person cannot be reached by *pratyaksha* (direct perception).

Knowledge, desire, *anuraaga* (deep affection), *se`vaa* (service) etc are seen to be subject to change in people. Therefore, they can be decided only from their behavior. When a lady hears the name of her adored husband, and hears people talk about his fine qualities, tears of love come into her eyes. She blushes, and her heart throbs with her love for him. These are signs that make people come to the conclusion that she is deeply in love with her husband. It is the same with Bhakti. Mahatmas have described the characteristics of a bhakta in different Shastras.

For example:

1. *Sammaana* (showing respect): No matter what state Arjuna was in, he would immediately stand up at the sight of Shri Krishna, because of the love and bhakti in his heart.
2. *Bahumaana* (high respect): When Raja Ikshavaku saw a lotus, a deer, or dark clouds, he would think of *kamalanayana* (lotus-eyed) Shri Krishna, a *krishnasaara* (black deer), and *me`ghashyaama* (the color of rain clouds) Shri Krishna. He would get engrossed in thoughts about Shri Krishna. He showed respect to anything that reminded him of his beloved Bhagwan.

That means, every name, form, object, sign, or connection that reminds a bhakta of Bhagwan is also revered.

3. *Preeti* (love): Vidura told Shri Krishna, '*Pundarikaaksha* (lotus-eyed)! Your coming to my house has given me such *preeti* (love), *tripti* (satisfaction) and anand that I am not able to express it! You are the *antaryaamee* (one who abides within), seated on the throne of my hriday.'
4. *Viraha* (the pain of separation): The gopis of Vrindavan tell each other, 'Sakhi, how can I tell you – it is not proper to speak of such things in the presence of elders – but I am burning with the fire of viraha for Shri Krishna. What can the elders do to me now?'
5. *Itara-vichikitsaa* (itara means any other; chikitsa means treatment): Indra came to grant a boon to Upamanyu, who was a bhakta of Shankar Bhagwan. Upamanyu told Indra, 'I am willing to turn into a moth or worm at the command of Shankar Bhagwan, O Indra, but I don't want anything from anyone else – not even the Kingdom of all three worlds!'
6. The *vriddhi* (spreading) of *mahimaa* (glory): Yama Raj – the presiding deity of Death – told the suffering beings in Narak (Hell), 'Why didn't you do the *aaraadhanaa* (worship) of Bhagwan, who removes all suffering?' He also whispered to his servants, 'I am not the ruler of people who worship Vishnu Bhagwan. Never bring them to my realm.'
7. *Tadartha praanasthaana* (living for the Beloved): When Shri Rama left this earth to go to His realm, He told Hanumanji to stay back on this earth to take care of His bhaktas. Hanumanji said, 'I will obey Your command to remain on this earth as long as I continue to get to listen to Your *kathaa* (discourse about Shri Rama), which purifies the heart.'
8. *Tadeeyataa* (to belong to Bhagwan): King Vasu said, 'All that is mine – my body, my Kingdom, wealth, wife, son, chariot etc – belongs to Bhagwan.' This was always what he felt.
9. *Bhagvadbhaava* (the feeling of Bhagwan) in all: Prahlad always said, 'Whatever exists – me-mine, you-yours, and the entire world, is a form of Bhagwan.'
10. *Apratikoolataa* (never being unfavorable): To remain in favor of Bhagwan even when things go against your belief and wishes. Shri Krishna picked up the wheel of a broken chariot to attack Bhishma

Pitamah. Bhishma Pitamah said, ‘Come, come, Prabhu! Put an end to this mortal body with Your lotus-like hands! Your beating is even greater than your caresses and love!’

The *adhikaaree* (eligible person) of Bhakti.

All the Darshans and Dharma Shastras contain *vichaara* (profound thought) on the *anubandha-chatushtaya* (four kinds of relationships or connection). For example, in *brahma-vichaara* (giving thought to the Brahman), a person who has *shama-dama* (six kinds of qualifications), and *mumukshaa* (a wish to be free of the cycle of rebirth), is an *adhikaaree* (eligible person) for obtaining Gnan about the Brahman.

For doing rituals like a Yagna etc, a person must be *arthee* (wealthy), *samarthee* (capable), *vidvaana* (learned), and eligible from the viewpoint of the Shastras. The eligibility or ineligibility for performing a ritual is decided from the viewpoint of the Shastras. A Brahmin is not supposed to do the Rajasuya Yagna; nor can a Kshatriya (a person of the warrior class) do the Vachaspati Sava Yagna.

In Bhakti, however, all are equally eligible to do Bhakti. The Bhakti Mimansa – written by unknown authors – says that if any qualification has to be given to an adhikari of Bhakti, it will have to be that he should be able to utter Bhagwan’s name, be desirous of obtaining Bhagwan, and be a knower of Bhagwan’s naam. Taking Bhagwan’s name is not forbidden by the Shastras no matter what state a bhakta is in. ‘*Saamarthyamarthitaa vidyaa vaadhikaarivishe`shanam naanyadashrute`h.*’

In Bhakti, there is no need even for Gnan, because *naama-uchharana* (uttering the name) can be done whether a person has Gnan or not. The naam gives the fruit, the way *amrita* (the elixir that bestows immortality) gives its fruit even when a person drinks it without knowing that it is amrita.

The Gnan required can also be obtained by the *upade`sha* (teaching) of the Guru. It is also possible that the *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions) of a person’s previous birth rise up. Such incidents are described in the Manu Smriti and the Mahabharata. ‘*Antyaadapi parama dharmam. (Manu Smriti)*’.

Just as everybody is eligible to serve his master, mother and father, and give sukha to his own Atma, everyone has the right to do the *se`vaa* (render service) of the Parameshwara who is the father of all, the master of all, and the Atma of all. This is why the Shandilya Bhakti Sutra has this command – *aanindyayonyadhikriyate` paaramparyaat saamaanyavat* – even people born in the lowest *yon*i (species) are eligible for Bhakti, because the desire to be free of dukha is equal in all beings. It is possible for any being to do bhakti, since they could have obtained this gnan through *itihaasa* (histories), *puraana* (ancient Indian legends) and the traditional teaching of their Guru, etc. This is the Gnan of the swarup of Bhagwan, who they worship. The commentary on this sutra of the Shruti is: ‘*Api vaa chaandaalah shiva iti vaacham vade`t te`na saha samvase`t,*’ is referred to in ‘Bhakti Chandrika’.

The Bhakti siddhanta accepts that Bhakti removes the *apavitrataa* (absence of purity according to the Shastras) caused by being born in a low-caste family and the lowly work they do due to *praarabdha* (fate decided by the actions of past births). ‘*Shvaadopi sadya savanaaya kalpate` (Bhagwat 3. 33. 6)*’. In his commentary on this, Jeev Goswami has written that a bhakta receives the same fruit by doing *kirtana* (singing Bhagwan’s name and glory) as an eligible person gets from doing Yagna-Yaag etc.

The Angiras Bhakti Darshan states that the reason everybody is eligible for Bhakti is that all are equal in Bhagwan’s bhakti. That means everybody has *anuraaga* (love; attachment) for Bhagwan. Anybody’s vritti can merge into the form of Bhagwan, and anybody can do naam-kirtan. Where is the question of adhikar in anuraaga? When anuraaga for Bhagwan rises in the heart, anyone – whether he is a human, bird or animal – becomes *pavitra* (pure according to the Shastras) – ‘*bhaktih punaati mannishthaa shvapaakaanapi sambhavaat (Bhagwat).*’

The Narad Bhakti Darshan states clearly that for bhaktas there are no divisions of of *jaati* (caste; group), *vidyaa* (learning), *roopa* (appearance; looks), *kula* (lineage), *dhana* (wealth), *kriyaa* (work; actions), etc. This is because their focus is shifted from the differences in the external world and turned towards Bhagwan. Bhagwan becomes their own (Sutra 72 – 73).

The conclusion of all is that in the path of Bhakti, there are no restrictions of *adhikaree-bhe`da* (different kinds of eligibility) as there are in other *saadhana* (methods for spiritual progress). This is the special quality of the Bhakti siddhanta.

The Niyam about Dhyana (rules about meditation).

The Bhakti siddhanta has no rules about where a person should sit for doing dhyana, what time dhyana should be done, or which form he should meditate on, as in the sadhan of dhyana.

In *karmakaanda* (Vedic rituals like Yagna-Yaag etc) there are rules that must be followed. For example, a Brahma Yagna is done facing the east. The Pitri Yagna, done for ancestors, must be done in early afternoon. A Yagna called Agnyadhan can be done only in the spring. There are many stipulations in Karmakand, but none in Bhakti. You can sit anywhere, face any direction, at any time, to think about Bhagwan or chant His name. A bhakta can think about his Ishtadev even while lying down, sitting, walking, eating, or doing anything else. None of the rules of Poorva Mimansa apply to the principle of Bhakti.

The Poorva Mimansa does not need an Ishwara! The Ishwara is not considered the *aadhaara* (support; foundation) of the world, nor the substance of which this world is made. The Ishwara is not the karta of this world either, and neither is He the one who bestows the fruit of their actions. He is not the one who utters the Vedas, nor is He the *antaryaamee* (one seated within the heart) Swami (Master).

In the Poorva Mimansa, it is the *karma* (action; ritual) that does everything. There is not even a touch of the Ishwara's *karunaa* (compassion; mercy) in this philosophy. What can a person's endeavor achieve?

In the Bhakti siddhanta, the Ishwara is everything. His *anugraha* (Grace), *karuna* and *prasaada* (blessing, distributed in the form of food offered first to Bhagwan), is the *sarvasva* (all-in-all) of a jeeva. That is why, when a jeeva remembers Bhagwan at any place, at any time, and in any form, He pulsates with compassion and manifests within and without, for the jeeva.

The fact is that if we meditate on the Ishwara with the hope of obtaining something either in our next birth or in the realms after death, and if we hope

to get the *apoorva* (latent fruit of our deeds, bestowed in due course), we will be bound by several rules of place, time, etc. If all we want is to see our Beloved, and that He should see us, no restrictions of time, place etc remain. The eyes can get *tripti* (full satisfaction) anywhere, at any time, whether the person is walking, looking out of a window, sitting, etc. The dhyana of a bhakta is *maanasa-tripti* (mental satisfaction), and the emergence of anand.

When the *chitta* (mental inclination; thoughts) becomes *nirmala* (unsullied by worldly considerations), and a person thinks about his Ishtadev, his Ishtadev's roop, naam, and dhyana entrance him. That time, that place, and that state is the most superior. The dhyana of Bhakti means an instantaneous experience of the *rasa* (sweet emotion) of *bhajana* (loving mediation). This is predominated by a *drishta* (experienced by the senses) sukha.

The Svetashvara Upanishad and the Gita contain descriptions of how the ground should be level, and the mind and body pure, when a person sits for dhyana. These are from a viewpoint of *praanaayaama* (Yogic breath control exercises). A person's health is affected by excess heat, cold, or dust. In Bhakti there are no restrictions of time, duration, place, or state, because a bhakta wants only to give sukha to his Beloved. This principle is also desired in the Vedanta Darshan. '*Yatraikagrataa tatraavishe'shaat (Brahma Sutra 4. 1. 11)*'. Thus, the Bhakti Darshan does not accept the rules of dhyana of the Poorva Mimansa. This is a special quality of the Bhakti Darshan.

A little bhakti has the shakti to remove paapa. Even a little remembering of Bhagwan's name, or doing naam-kirtan, destroys the greatest *paapa* (sin). The Shrimad Bhagwat describes how it is believed that taking Bhagwan's name even unknowingly burns up the greatest sin. Taking His name even as an indication, or jokingly, or as a support, or to scold, or even in disdain, destroys all paapa.

Ajamil called out to his son, 'Narayana!' as he lay on his deathbed, and was granted salvation. The Sattva Samhita states that if a person hears Bhagwan's name at the time of death, he gets Mukti even if the name is pronounced faultily.

There is no question of *shraddhaa* (faith) if a person has agnan. The question arises how a person who has neither shraddha nor Gnan, and whose lifestyle is

sinful, gets the fruit of the naam. There must be some great cause for this. This is a subject for deliberation.

In rituals of Dharma there is a need for the person to be an *adhikaaree* (eligible person), *vidhi-vidhaana* (proper method-following the rules), *dravya* (money; substances), *samaya* (right time), *sthaana* (suitable place), mantras, etc. The apoorva that is created by the ritual gives its fruit at the right time.

However, this is not the case in Bhakti. The efforts of a bhakta avail hardly anything: Bhagwan's anugraha is everything. A bhakta uses any excuse – naam, *dhaama* (a holy place), *smarana* (remembering Bhagwan), *poojaa* (ritual worship), or anything else – and Bhagwan's karuna-shakti descends on him. Where *paurusha* (human effort) fails, Bhagwan's compassion gives kalyan. Therefore, the actual name is not essential; Bhagwan's Grace is showered on a bhakta even by *naamaabhaasa* (the illusion of having taken His name).

Dharma is *tvam-pradhaana* – the effort of the jeeva is predominant in it, whereas Bhakti is *tat-pradhaana* – the Grace of the Ishwara is predominant in it. This has been stated right from the start.

The question is, when Prabhu is pleased by this very simple and easy method, why do people undertake difficult rituals like the Krichha, Chandrayana, Santapan, Kshaura etc, and go to *teertha* (holy places) etc to atone for their sins?

The answer to this is, firstly, when people who have a very high opinion of themselves hear about these extremely difficult methods, they are unable to believe that their sins can be destroyed by just taking Bhagwan's name. The second point is that it is not possible for all ailments to be cured by one medicine. How can a person who does not recognize the *sanjeevani* (a plant whose leaves have miraculous healing powers) accept that the leaves of a plant can have such powers of revival?

Therefore, those who are impressed by elaborate rituals undertake such rituals, and those who are inclined towards the sanjivani of the naam-amrita, will chant His name. The naam is *kasturi* (musk) – just a smear of it on the tongue cures the biggest disease.

Even in *karma-kaanda* (Vedic rituals like Yagna-Yaag), the Vishwajit Yagna is done without bothering about the right *satra* (sacrificial session). Elaborate rituals like Darsha and Poornamas are done to obtain the fruit of the Jyotishtoma Yagna. In all these elaborate forms of worship, it is the shakti of the jeeva that works, but in small efforts like taking Bhagwan's naam, it is Bhagwan's shakti that works.

There is a statement in the Skanda Purana, that even if a simple and easy method of *prayaashchitta* (penance; atonement) is available, you should tell the person to do a very difficult method. A difficult penance is a deterrent that stops people from doing paapa. Once a paapa is done, it should be removed by using the prescribed method, with a feeling of bhakti. This is why Shandilya has said, '*Laghvaapi mahat kshe`pakam.*'

Generally, the Puranas say that it is improper to imagine that praise of Bhagwan's Bhakti is arthavad (unnecessary repetition). The *punya* (spiritual merit) of a person who believes in arthavad is also worldly. Such people obtain Narak (Hell) after death. With the naam, however, it is written clearly that the greatness of the naam should not be considered arthavad.

Shrutismritipuraane`shu naamamaahaatmyavaachishu,

ye`rthavaada iti brooyurna te`shaam nirayakshayah.

The Shrutis, Smritis and Puranas have good reason to praise Bhagwan, so this cannot be called arthavad.

By this, the doorway to the *mimaansaa* (inquiry) into other subjects is opened. It also makes learning successful. The conclusion is that the Puranas that describe an *aviruddha* (not opposing) meaning should not be considered to be unreliable in their purport. To consider the greatness of Bhagwan's name to be arthavad is a *naamaparaadha* (an offence against Bhagwan's name). It blocks the fruit of the naam.

What is the reason for considering the greatness of the naam to be arthavad? Is it merely the residue of some vidhi-vidhan, or is the purport about something other than the chanting of the naam?

There is no hesitation in saying that the Shastras state unambiguously that *naam-ucchaarana* (uttering the naam) has the capacity to destroy all paapas. An Ashvamedha Yagna is recommended for the removal of the paapa of *brahmahatyaa* (killing a Brahmin). *Naama-smarana* (remembering the name) is equally competent for this. It is another matter that the Ashvamedha Yagna is done once, and its fruit is over; whereas Bhagwan's naam pervades the subtle space in the heart, settling in so deeply that it remains there until the person gets Mukti. Hence, if the Ashvamedha Yagna is considered to be greater from the viewpoint of elaborate and expensive rituals, whereas the naam is considered greater from the viewpoint of its ability to pervade the inner life of a jeeva. Therefore, it is absolutely inappropriate to consider the greatness of the naam to be arthavad.

To say that the greatness of naam-sankirtan is limited to the Kali Yuga (the present eon of Time called the Kali Yuga) is not justified. In fact, it is besmirching the greatness of the naam. To say about any object that it is good for this village or this time, is to reduce its value.

We can also say that *dosha* (faults in people) are fewer in the Satya, Treta and Dwapar Yugas. People in those Yugas did dhyana and Yagnas, and elaborate rituals of worship. In the Kali Yuga, however, the doshas are many times more, and far greater. Therefore, Bhagwan took a Naam-Avatar to remove them! His naam is a manifestation of His *anugraha* (Grace); it brings forth the roop, it supports dhyana, fulfills a Yagna, and becomes the mantra in an *archanaa* (ritual offering). It is a sadhan recommended by the Vedas, and therefore, it is *nitya* (everlasting). Its influence remains equally powerful in all four Yugas. The naam gives *poornataa* (wholeness) to the *nyoona* (deficient) and the *chhidra* (defective).

Two kinds of people are seen in this world. One kind are those who want to carry out the duties that are very difficult, and the other kind are those who want to undertake the easy method. They get frightened when they hear about rituals that involve hardship and expense. The first kind is inclined to disdain anything that is simple, not involving elaborate rituals, severe austerities, and considerable expenditure.

That being the case, people who are inclined towards arduous rituals like the Samvatsarik-vrat, Krichhra-Chandrayana vrat, etc should do these rituals, and people who have faith in the naam should do naam-japa, etc. There are those who are inclined to big things and those inclined to modest things. Nobody criticizes the faith and rituals of those who inquire into the Bhakti siddhanta. The principle of Bhakti believes Bhagwan's anugraha to be greater than the efforts of a human being. It also establishes the fact that Bhagwan is pleased with even *naam-aabhaasa* (the naam taken in some other context), and can grant kalyan.

The Gunas of Bhakti (good qualities of Bhakti).

In the opinion of the Bhakti Mimansa, Bhakti is the *parama* (highest) *purushaarth* (human endeavor or achievement), not Moksha. This is why different Darshans (philosophies) have said that Bhakti is *falaroopaa* (the form of the fruit), or *svayama falaroopaa* (its own fruit).

In Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu a shloka from the Shrimad Bhagwat is explained by the comment that bhaktas refuse to accept any of the different Muktis granted by Bhagwan [there are several Muktis, like *saayujya*, *saalokya*, *saalokya* etc) as a characteristic of Bhakti.

1. Kleshaghni (the destroyer of distress) Bhakti – Bhakti destroys *kle'sha* (distress). Klesha is of three kinds – paapa, the seed of paapa, and avidya.

Paapa are of two kinds – *apraarabdha paapa*, meaning, paapa that is not done as a result of deeds done in past births, and *praarabdha paapa*, meaning, the paapas push a person into wrongdoing because of the actions of his past births.

It is written in the eleventh canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat that just as a burning lamp burns up the oil in the lamp, Bhakti for Bhagwan burns up the *sanchita* (accumulated through several births) paapa of a bhakta.

About the prarabdha paapa it says that even those who are born in a low-caste family get the *punya* (spiritual merit earned by doing good deeds) of doing a Yagna, when they chant Bhagwan's naam, remember Him, and do kirtan. The Durgam Samgamani states clearly that the prarabdha paapas of a person born in a family where the traditional

work involves actions that give paapa, are nullified, and he can obtain the punya of a highest caste person whose traditional work give punya.

The aprarabdha paapa are of three kinds – *koota* (steady), *beej* (seed), and *fala-unmukha* (with the goal of worldly benefits). All these are destroyed by Bhakti. This is stated in the Padma Purana.

The fourth canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat states that the *granthi-bhe`da* (granthi means the knot of nescience, believing that we will die when the body dies; bheda means breaking this knot, becoming free of this false belief) cannot be achieved by restraining the senses, or making the mana free of sense objects. Work done with the *aashraya* (refuge) of Bhakti makes a person *nirgrantha* (free of this granthi). This means, Bhakti has the power to destroy avidya.

2. Shubhada (the bestower of auspiciousness) – Bhagwan's bhakti is *se`vaa* (service) of the Sarvatma – the Atma in all – because He is *sarva-aatma*. This gives the fruit of giving *tripti* (satisfaction) to all creation. All the *sad-guna* (good tendencies) abide in a bhakta. A bhakta gets *laukika* (of this world) as well as *paara-laukika* (of realms after death) sukha, up to the sukha of Brahmaloaka – the realm of Brahmaji.
3. Moksha sukha is smaller – as soon as Bhakti Maharani settles a little in the heart, all four Purusharthas (Artha = worldly success, Dharma = doing religious rituals, Kama = fulfillment of worldly desires, and Moksha = release from the cycle of rebirth) become as paltry as a wisp of grass. Mukti and other *siddhi* (supernatural powers), and marvelous worldly pleasures are the *daasee* (handmaidens) of a bhakta. The Artha Purushartha is external, and obviously subject to destruction. Bhoga (worldly pleasure) is obtained through effort, and becomes a cause of bondage because of *vaasanaa* (avid worldly desires). Dharma is done through *kriyaa* (actions), and therefore, it does not bestow fruit that is everlasting. Moksha is obtained through Tattva-Gnan (Gnan about the essence of the non-dual Brahman, the substratum of all that exists), and is our own Atma. There is no feeling of *praapya-praapaka* (to be obtained – the one who obtains) in it. Whether the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) are perceived or not, they must be negated. The Atma is Moksha.

In the Bhakti siddhanta the upadhi of the buddhi merges into the Parameshwara, and that is Moksha. Bhakti, however, is present in *bandhana* (bondage) as well as in Moksha.

4. Bhakti is *durlabha* (extremely rare) – *durlabhataa* (rarity) is of two kinds. One is that a jeeva cannot easily obtain Bhakti by doing Yagnas or a thousand other sadhans. Secondly, Bhagwan grants Moksha more readily to a person who does bhajan etc, than giving Bhakti. Bhagwan says, '*Muktim dadaati karhichit sma na bhaktiyogam.*'
5. Bhakti is a special kind of *ghanaananda* (concentrated anand) – it has been said that even if *brahmaananda* (the anand of Brahmagi) is multiplied repeatedly, it cannot compare with the sukha given by Bhakti. Brahmanand is *shaanta* (passive) whereas Bhagavad-anand is rapturous. In Bhakti the yearning of prema and the tripti of Bhagwan's rasa exist simultaneously. Shridhar Swami has said, 'There is such immense joy in wallowing in the sea of the amrita of Bhagwan's *kathaa* (talks about Bhagwan) that all four Purusharthas seem as paltry as a wisp of grass in comparison.'
6. Bhakti attracts Shri Krishna – it is an extraordinary feature of the *saguna brahmavidyaa* (Gnan about the Brahman with attributes) that it makes Bhagwan – the *priyatam* (Beloved) – the *pre`mee* (lover).

Rituals of Dharma, *vive`ka* (discriminating between the eternal and the transient), practicing Yoga, great learning, severe asceticism, and worldly renunciation do not have the kind of attraction Bhakti has, for Bhagwan. This is because Bhakti is not just *shrama* (work), knowledge, or mere touch; it is prema. It is attraction. It is a merging of hearts. In it, Bhagwan Himself delights in His Bhaktas!

Shri Krishna Bhagwan would go to the Pandavas uninvited, and stay with them. He would put His head on the lap of Yashoda and Nanda, and cry. He felt such joy at Sudama's embrace that tears flowed from His eyes. He became so restless for Rukmini that He could not get sleep at night. He allowed Himself to be tied up by Yashoda. He offered Himself up to the gopis of Vrindavan. When He wanted to touch Radharani in His imagination, He felt afraid to do so, because His hand was rough and her skin so delicate!

Thus, Bhakti has the capacity to captivate Bhagwan.

‘Bhakte`falameeshvara vasheekaarah.’

(The fruit of Bhakti is to captivate Bhagwan.)

Chapter 2.

The Spanda Tattva.

(An exposition of an ancient method of sadhana.)

The name, Spanda Tattva has been used for the Param Tattva (Supreme Essence; the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) since ancient times. The *shuddhaatmaa* (pristine Atma) Shiva, *bhaava* (something that exists), *svabhaava* (essential nature), *gnataa* (knower), and *saamaanya* (common) are synonyms of the Spanda Tattva.

The Spanda Tattva has been known as the Kashmiri Pratyabhigna Darshan Sangraha (a compilation of all Darshans of the personal experience schools). Acharya Bhatt Kallat obtained this from his Guru, Shri Vasu Gupta. He compiled this teaching in a collection of fifty shlokas. Utpal Acharya wrote a commentary on the Spanda tattva in the mid-tenth century. He called it the Spanda Pradeepika. It is written in Sanskrit. It was published only once, in 1898, by the Medical Hall Press in Benares. The substance is given below in a concise form.

The Param Tattva (Supreme Essence) manifests Itself in the verbal form of Spanda (a vibration; pulsation). This is written in the Agam Rahasya and Shangunya Vivek. Just as a staircase is required to climb up to the seventh floor of a building, or a boat is needed to go across a river, the Shastras are needed to acquire knowledge about Bhagwan *shaastaa* (Ruler), according to the Pancharatra.

There is a special connection between the *siddha* (those who have attained their spiritual goal) and the *saadhaarana* (general) people, without which the experience of the actual Tattva is not possible. In this *grantha* (book; treatise) the Spanda is the *vaachya* (what is spoken) and the *shabda* (word) is the *vaachaka* (the speaker).

The meaning of the word spanda is, to move slightly, to vibrate, or to pulsate. The Paramatma – who is absolutely still – has the ability to simultaneously turn into all forms with this slight movement. This does not affect the quality of being *nirvikalpa* (unchanging; remaining in His pristine form).

All the gnans in interaction have a *krama* (serial order) of the rising of substances, or matter. However, apart from these, there is a *samvid* (awareness), a *pramaataa* (one who establishes) who is *chid-roopa* (the form of consciousness). Actually, that pure consciousness is the Maheshwara (the Ishwara of all). It is because of Him that all *bhe`da* (separateness) is established (Ishwara Pratyabhigna). He is also known as the Chit, Samvit, Gnan, and *bodha* (incandiscent understanding). The feeling is that He is not subject to the divisions of space, time, and matter. He is *adviteeya* (non-dual).

He is obtained by *shraddhaa* (faith), and He is *paroksha* (not perceived by the senses). He is established by the direct personal experience of being our own Atma. He is the Parameshwara of the Shakti-chakra (the wheel of energy), and is the Atma-Chintamani (the Atma that is like the wish-fulfilling gem). He is *abhidhe`ya* (subject matter) because He is the *upe`ya* (to be obtained; the goal).

Very well; why is He the Chintamani?

It is because the Shastras have declared that He is *sva-anubhooti* (to be experienced as the Self). It is written in the Paushkar Samhita that when a person searches for the Chintamani he does not get the essence of any object; he gets what he desires. The *sarva-shakti* (all-powerful) Brahman is the same –

Chintaamanee svaroope`na na kinchidupalabhyate`,

atha chaamimatam soote` brahmaivam sarvashaktikam.

The Paramartha Saar also states that Bhagwan is everything. However, the feeling with which His *upaasanaa* (loving worship) is done is the form in which He is obtained, the way the Chintamani fulfills the wish of the seeker.

Sarvaakaaraa bhagavaanupaasayate` ye`na ye`na bhaave`na,

tam tam bhaavam bhootvaa chintaamaniriva samabhye`ti.

The Gnan Sambodhan shares this opinion. The Shakti of Gnan is essentially one, but due to *sankalpa bhe`da* (different resolves) it results in different forms, the way one Chintamani bestows wealth in different forms.

*Svabhaavaade`karoopaani naanaatvam pratipadyate`,
gnaanasya shaktih sankalpairlakshmishchintaamaniriva.*

It is called Shiva-Shankar because it is the root of the ultimate *shre`ya* (benefit; liberation from rebirth). It is actually *nirnaamaka* (nameless). In his book, Abhedartha Karika, Siddha Nath has written that the *paramaarthavastu* (the object that is the highest spiritual goal) is *bhaava shoonya* (empty of feelings), *agraahya* (beyond human understanding), and *niraakaara* (without form). The name 'Shiva' is also imagined.

The Paramartha Vastu has no *parinaama* (conclusion) and no *vivarta* (variable). Or, you can say that even if It has both, there are no divisions in It.

*Vastuno bhaavashoonyasya tvagraahyasya niraakrite`h,
kalpanaamaatrane`vaitat yachhivavyapade`shanam.
Ne`ttham vibhorvivartosti parinaamashcha na kvachit,
atha vaa dvayamapyastu tathaapyasya na khandanaa.*

The same thing is stated in the Samvit Prakash. The Paramartha is *nirmalabodhaikya svaroopo* – the form of pristine knowledge of the essence of the Brahman and the Atma being one. The possibility of Its having a body can be facilitated through both *vivarta* and *parinam*. The Paramartha is *achyuta* (never displaced from Its pristine state). In the variable, It does not need to be what It appears to be. The *parinam* is also like the gold in the earring.

*Iti nirmalabodhaikaroope` de`haparigrahaah,
vivarta-parinaamaabhyaam dvaabhyaamapyupapadyate`.
Vivartapyatathaaroopastathaa bhaasi tvamachyuta,
parinaame` sa e`va tvam suvarnamiva kundale`.*

The question is how is such a Tattva made to appear? Wherever we look, we see this Tattva hidden in the forms of *sukha*, *dukha*, *moha* (deluded thinking), *spanda*, *nisspanda* (complete stillness), etc.

The answer to this is, these sukha-dukha etc are *gne`ya* (known), and therefore, they are *sattaa-shoonya* (transient; having no eternal existence). They are established only because of the *aashraya* (refuge) of the *gnaataa* (the one who knows).

People whose intellect is *a-buddha* (not awakened) renounce their *shuddha-buddha* (pure-enlightened) *svaroopaa* (essence; true form). Their desires are the cause of their identifying their Aham ('I') with their body. This results in their true form shrinking, in spite of being infinite. This contraction is due to avidya – the nescience that makes a person forget that he is the Atma, not the body.

Their own *samvit-svaroopaa* (the essence that is pure consciousness) is *adviteeya* (non-dual). Therefore, the Mahapurushas who are established in their swarup never have false understanding. This will be clarified further as we proceed.

It is written in the Dhatu Sameeksha that this Atma, strengthened by avidya, is seated in the form of the *prame`ya* (that, which is established), meaning, the difference between the *drashtaa* (seer) and the *drishya* (that, which is seen) is not real. The deluded Atma is unable to absorb its swarup. Avidya itself is a lie; it is *asatya*. Something that is not real cannot destroy or deteriorate any object.

A piece of rope does not change because darkness covers it; nor is it destroyed by darkness. Avidya is like darkness – it cannot change or destroy the Atma. Thus, the Paramatma – who is the form of Gnan – has no self-created bondage or binding by any other. It seems to be bound because of avidya. When agnan is destroyed it becomes evident that the Atma has always been free.

Avidyaashabalasyaasya sthitam me`yatvamaatmanah,

griheetam na nijam roopam shable`na taadaatmanaa.

Saa chaanritaاتمikaavidyaa naanritasya hi vaastutaa,

naavastu vastuno naasham vikaaram vaa karotyatah.

Naachchhaaditasya tamasaa rajjukhandasya vikriyaa,

naasho vaa kriyate` yadvat tadvannaavidyayaatmanaa.

Naatah svato na parato bandhosya paramaatmanah,

baddhothaavidyayaa jeevo muktistasta hi tatkschaye`.

The Tattva Yukti states that the terrible karmas by which worldly people are bound are also *upaaya* (methods) for Mukti, but their own foolishness prevents them from using these methods to become free of their worldly bonds. The Kula Yukti also states that the cause of people's *patana* (downfall) and their *abhyuthaana* (becoming uplifted) is the same.

An *agnaanee* (one who lacks Gnan) gets bound by the very same thing a Gnani uses for his liberation. Utpal Acharya has said that the very causes of dukha for an agnani are used by a person with the right intellect to cross over dukha. A ball made of iron sinks, but a bowl made of iron floats!

The Gita states clearly that only a person in whom all desires have been absorbed gets *shaanti* (inner peace); not a person who is filled with desires (Gita 2. 70). The Gita states, in shloka 2. 64, that *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) indulged in with no trace of *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion) in it, is a method for obtaining *prasaada* (peace).

One Mahatma has said, 'A person who has Gnan about the Paramartha accepts *vishaya* (sense objects) without abandoning the feeling of being the Atma (not the body) is a *jeevana-mukta* (liberated soul). Vishayas are the spanda of the Atma. It is like an actor playing many roles.'

In the Chit-Shakti Samstuti, Yogi Nath has written that *udaya* (rising up of Creation) and *pralaya* (dissolution) are caused by the *pravritti* (activity) and *nivritti* (inactivity) of the Shakti.

Thus, everything is the pulsation of the Shakti.

It is like the smoke caused by a fire that is out of sight. The *dvaita-roopa* (form of duality) *srishti* (Creation) is the same as in the advaita Paramatma. The nose becomes moist before sunrise, and dries after the sun has risen. The moisture is *saakaara* (with form) and the dryness is *niraakaara* (without form).

We will give some thought to this topic, because it is the purpose of the Shastras to expound upon the *upaaya* (method of achieving something) and the *upe`ya* (the goal to be achieved). The Gnan of the Shastras establishes the swarup of the method in the experience of a person.

It is also to be kept in mind that this Darshan is independent. In spite of being independent, it does not disturb the Shastras that expound the Advaita Darshan.

While discussing the basic of the Spanda, the *vaani* (speech at different levels) like the Pashyanti, are created in their own *krama* (serial order). According to the Samvit Prakash it is this vani that does the *udaya-vilaya* (rising up – dissolving) of this world. It takes on the name according to the action, and carries out the strange lifestyle of the *chara-achara* (moving-unmoving) world. *Pranayana* (bringing forth) and *sankocha* (contraction; shrinking) are both forms of this vani. It is in these that *naama-roopa* (name-form) and *vyavahaara* (interaction) abide.

If we refuse to accept the *sattaa* (existence) of this Shakti, no other school of thought can be established, because it is this Shakti that illuminates all *vaada* (opinions; principles). It is called the Adi Siddhi in the Ishwara Pratyabhigna. It is our own Atma that is *aadi-siddha* (eternally established), *gnaataa* (the one who knows), *kartaa* (the one who does everything), Maheshwara. No other, who has consciousness, is needed to negate or establish this Atma. The Atma is that, by which everything is established. That, which remains after everything else is negated, is the Atma.

Kartari gnaatari svaatmanyaaadisiddhe`mahe`shvare`,

ajadaatmaa nische`dham vaa siddhim vaa vidadheeta kah?

The *aadi* (beginning), *madhya* (middle), and *anta* (end) of all *vishayaakaara vritti* (inclination for the forms of the objects of the senses) is the effulgent self-established Paramartha. *Moha* (deluded thinking) is the cause of a person being unable to grasp this, and the reason for his doubts.

A petty King sometimes asks the Emperor for a part of his Army, and then attacks the Emperor. He gets destroyed. In the same way, a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) who obtains Shakti from the eternally

established Atma, and then thinks about sense objects, destroys himself. It is self-established that the *aatma-sattaa* (the existence of the Atma) is never overcome by anything or anyone.

The first shloka of the Karika is:

*Yasyonme`shanime`shaabhyaam jagatah pralayodayou,
tam shaktichakravibhavaprabhavam shankaram stumah. 1*

The *mangala shloka* (auspicious opening shloka) contains the *stuti-nati* (praise – bowing down) for Shankar Bhagwan. He, who bestows bhoga and Moksha (worldly pleasures and freedom from rebirth), and *shre`ya* and *pre`ya* (that which is beneficial and that, which is pleasant), is Shankar. His *svabhaava* (essential nature) is *advaita* (non-dual).

In this principle, *jeevana-mukti* (being free of the identification with the body) is Moksha. The *samvid* (perception; consciousness) is the *gnaataa* (the one who knows), *kartaa* (the one who does), *bhoktaa* (the one who experiences), and the Ishwara (ruler). This is not some *adhyaaropa* (superimposition) or *adhyasa* (false attribution). Everything exists simultaneously in the Samvit.

It is written in the Sarvagna Bhairav, ‘Moksha is not to go to any other place; nor is Moksha any particular place. Moksha is the opening up of the *agnaana-granthi* (the imaginary knot that binds the Atma to the body).’

*Naanyatra gamanam sthaanam mokshosti surasundari,
agnaana-granthibhe`do yah sa moksha iti kathyate`.*

The Moksha-Dharma (essential nature of Moksha) described in the Mahabharata explains that a *chitta* (frame of mind) that is sullied by raaga-dvesha and other emotions, is the *sansaara* (interactive world); and the *chitta* that is turned away from them is Moksha.

The philosophy of the Buddhists also affirms that the sansara is the *chitta* sullied by raaga-dvesha etc, and Moksha is a *pavitra* (pure) *chitta*. The Narad Sangraha states that everything *vikshipta* (agitated; turbulent) is the sansara. There is no *bandhana* (worldly bondage) apart from *vikalpa*

(options). The author has stated that the *bandhaka* (the rope that is used to bind), the *bandhana-kartaa* (the one who binds) and the *baddha* (the one who is bound) are not three; they are one. Each person is bound by his own vikalpa.

The Atma Saptati explains that bondage is not due to the circumstances; so where will Moksha be? Both are buried by vikalpa.

The fact is there is neither bandhan nor Mukti. In the book Pancha Ratra the words Bhagwan, *sarvagna* (all-knowing), *sarve`shvara* (the ruler of all), and *sarva-shakti* (the one who has all the powers) are used as synonyms for the Atma-Samvit. The definition of the word 'Bhagwan' is the same as in the Vaishnava principle, where the Brahman is worshipped in the form of Bhagwan Vishnu.

Had the oneness of Bhagwan and the Samvit not been approved of, how could the difference between the *stotaa* (the one who praises), *stutya* (the one who is praised), and *stuti* (praise) be seen as one Tattva? Just as it is not possible to cross over your own shadow, it is not possible to cross over the Advaita either!

Make the *gne`ya* (that, which is known) one with your *svaroopa* (essence; true form), and look at Gnan. You will see that Gnan and the gneya are not separate. All these differences are verbal. They are mere alternatives. The cause of *shabda* (words, sounds) is vikalpa, and vikalpa is caused by shabda! That, which is not separate from its own perception, remains *abhinna* (not separate; one) even when it is the subject of verbal interaction.

Interaction is carried out through speech. The Samvit Prakash says that *vaak* (speech) is the cause of all worldly interaction. This is logical; it is not something unseen and unknown, like the Swarga (Heaven) described by the Shastras.

No *kaarya* (work; action) is done without a *sankalpa* (resolve), and no vikalpa is possible without *vaak*. The basic *bodha* (comprehensive understanding) of this *vaak* is the Atma. The Jayakhya Samhita has demonstrated this in detail. There are many subtle differences in words, like *maatras* (a part), *atisookshma* (very subtle), *parama* (highest),

madhyama (middle), *sthoora* (dense), *sthooratara* (more dense), etc. It is present in some form or other, in every interaction. This Samvit, the form of Shiva-Shankara, is the *poorva-roopa* (earlier form) of every physical, verbal and mental interaction. It is this that has been praised in the Mangalacharan.

What is this?

That, by the *unme'sha* (opening of the eyes) the world arises, and the *paramparaa* (uninterrupted series) continues; and that, by the *nime'sha* (blinking of the eyes) by which dissolution takes place, is the same. Just as the world is seen during the waking state, and nothing is seen during the deep sleep state; the unmesh and nimesh that cause Creation and Dissolution are nothing but the Atma-Samvit.

The Tattva Vichar states that the rising up and disappearing of the world are tied to the expansion and contraction of Shakti. This Shakti belongs to Shiva – the Atma. The Kakshya Stotra shares this opinion. 'It is by Your will that Your unmesh and nimesh are called srishti (Creation) and pralay (Dissolution).'

This becomes evident when you give it a little thought. In unmesh, *gnaana-kriyaa* (knowledge-action) are the result of the *ichhaa-shakti* (the power of desire), and it expands. Desire activates Gnan, and actions done with the help of the organs of action create the objects of the world.

The *viraama* (pause; resting) of this process is pralay. The essential use of the words unmesh and nimesh is auspicious, fulfilling the foremost cause of Creation. The serial order of the words is not intentional in this. Unmesha has Mukti and so has nimesha, because the latter is *nistaranga* (unmoving, like a lake without ripples).

Shiva-Shankar is the form of the consciousness of the Atma. It is also called the Shakti-chakra Vibhavaprabhava. There are many Shaktis. According to the Malini Vijay, desire is the Shakti used by the *jagat-srashtaa* (creator of the world). When this Shakti manifests as the world, it becomes Gnan-Shakti. When desire turns into action it becomes *kriyaa-shakti* (the power of action). With the *upaadhi* (attribute) of *artha* (worldly achievement) it is

given many names, like the Chintamani. Just as the Mother wears a multicoloured garland, this Shakti dons a garland of forms, vowels, and syllables.

The Shakti-chakra is of four kinds – Khechari, Gochari, Dikchari and Bhoochari. These are also called Para, Pashyanti, Madhyama, and Vaikhari. Anand, *icchaa* (desire), Gnan and kriya abide in them. None of the Shaktis are separate from the Atma-Samvit. The *ullaasa* (splendor) of Paramananda is the *chidaatmaa* (the Atma that is pure consciousness), free of a gross human form made of the five elements. It is the Para Vaishnavi Shakti (the highest power of the Brahman worshipped in the form of Bhagwan Vishnu, the preserver of the world).

It is by these Shaktis that the Samvit assumes a form, and destroys the Danava (Demons; demoniac powers). Because it is *hita-kaarinee* (the cause of everything beneficial) this Shakti is called *maataa* (Mother). All the Shaktis are *vignaana-de`ha* (composed of acquired knowledge).

This is not the place for discussing the quintessence of the Shaktis. You can believe them to be anything, according to any school of thought. Different *mata* (opinions) describe them differently, as Khechari, Ichha, Para, Aghora, Vama, Brahmi, Vaishnavi, Shaivi, Sauri, Bauddhi, etc. Some call it the Akshara-roopa and also Kaarana-roopa. Whatever it is, all I want to say is that Bhagwan Spanda-roopa is the basic cause of all these Shaktis.

The Maya-Vaman Samhita describes that Bhagwan, surrounded by all the Shaktis, is the only *dhye`ya* (object worthy of meditation) and *upaasya* (worthy of worship). The Kula Yukti gives a beautiful comment. ‘Vedanta, Vaishnav, Shaiva, Saurya, Bauddha, and other different schools of thought have the same one Shuddha Atma, who is both the *gnaataa* (one who knows) and the *gne`ya* (that, which is known). The One who knows, is the One who is known. It is absolutely correct to say that we bow down to Him, whose unmesha and nimesha cause Creation and Dissolution.’

The fact is, it is the combination of Shaktis that arise in different forms. The *shaktimaana* (the one whose Shakti it is) Atma is the Maheshwara, and the Shaktis are the *jagat* (world). Just as every part of an attractive lady is attractive, the consciousness of the Paramatma overflows in the form of

the world. It is only by the power of these Shaktis that the name 'Prabhu' (Lord) is justified.

The question is, why is the Atma's splendor covered up in the state of this interactive world?

The answer is given in the original Karika.

Yatra sthitamidam sarvam kaaryam yasmachcha nirgatam,

tasyaanaavritaroopatvataanna nirodhosti kutrachit? 2.

The Spanda Tattva – in which this world exists in the form of knowledge and action – is the form of Gnan in the nimesh state. It is not hidden when it is in this state; never blocked anywhere, in any way. The fact is, the *bodhya* (that, which is known) has no independent existence. The Atma, that is conscious and awake, is revealed in both states.

The ancient Acharyas (Masters; Teachers) have said, 'The different items made of gold are not separate from the gold of which they are made. Gold that is not made into an ornament is in the form of a lump. It is the same with the *nitya-svaroop*a (eternal essence) of which this world is made. The Atma that is free of distinguishing factors is the form of pure consciousness. It is the same regarding the eternal swarup that manifests in the form of this world. Gold is a lump when not molded into any form; the Atma is pure consciousness when there is no perception.'

The Atma Sambodh says that the *aakaasha* (space) is the refuge of the world; this world is not the refuge of space. Gnan is like space – it is infinite; whereas the *gne`ya* (that, which can be known) is like the world, it is limited. Its existence is of a lower level. Space is all-pervading, so there are no divisions in it, and no boundaries. Similarly, the Gnan-swarup Atma is also limitless.

Very well; it may be that there are no obstacles in the Gnan-swarup, created by different vrittis, or the destruction of these vrittis, but how can it remain unrestrained in the *jagrita avasthaa* (waking state)? The answer is given in the Karika by Acharya Bhatt Kallat.

Jaagradaadi vibhe`de`pi tadabhinne` prasarpati,

nivartate` nijaannaiva svabhaavaadupalabdhritah. 3

It is true that the states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep keep changing, but none of them are separate from the Atma Samvit. In spite of its obtaining the different states the Atma does not slip from its pristine nature, because it is the *upalabdhaa* (the one who obtains). The one who obtains the states remains unchanged in all the states. The difference is in the states, not in the Tattva in whom the states fluctuate. The sapling of a poisonous tree is as poisonous as the full-grown tree. The state of the tree changes; the poison remains the same.

It is well-known that awareness is present in the waking state and dreaming state. The *samve`ttaa* (person who is aware) is *akshunna* (continuous; uninterrupted). The moon reflected in the water moves when there are ripples in the lake, but the movement does not affect the moon in any way. States dance, changing their forms, but they do not affect the Paramatma in any way. Just as any movement of a limb is not separate from the limb, every difference is like a movement of the form of the Paramatma.

The *drashtaa* (one who perceives) absorbs the meaning from the sense organs, and that is the *jaagrita avasthaa* (waking state). In the state when the sense organs are not being used, the *drashtaa* (one who sees) absorbs the meaning through the *mana* (emotional mind), and that state is the *svapna avasthaa* (dream state). When there is no meaning, and no memory, it is the *sushupti avasthaa*, the deep sleep state. The Atma, however, is the *shuddha bodhaikya svaroopaa* (pure non-dual essence of Gnan); it remains pristine, as it is. This is its *tureeyataa* (being established in the fourth state of consciousness, the Tureeya avastha, where the Atma and the Paramatma are one).

Some people are of the opinion that the avasthas are within the world, but the *avasthaataa* (the one who experiences the states) is not. To refute this, the Acharya gives the fourth Karika.

Aham sukhi cha dukhee cha raktashche`tyaadisamvidah,

sukhaadyavasthaanusyootee` vartante`nyatra taa sfutam. 4

‘I am sukhi-dukhi, *raagee* (full of worldly attachments), etc’ – all these perceptions are states of the mind. That ‘I am separate from the things I perceive’ is obvious. Things are perceived only because of the samvetta.

In the opinion of the *kshnika gnaanavaadee* (those who believe that the world is a fleeting awareness; the Buddhist philosophy), many rivers enter the sea. They seem to become one when they merge into the sea. This samvetta is not identification with the states, however. The *karya-kaarana bhaava* (feeling of the effect and the cause) – or the *baadhya-baadhaka bhaava* (feeling of the tying and the one who binds) – are not established until the same *pramaataa* (one who establishes) experiences the previous state as well as the later state.

When every moment is separate, and every *samvit* (awareness; perception) is separate, how will the later *prame`ya* (that, which is established) know what was established earlier? Nothing that is established is of any use, unless the connection between the past and present is grasped. How can *mithyaa gnaana* (knowledge that is a relative truth; knowledge of something transient) be established as *mithyaa* (false; transient) without the samvetta?

The fact is, unless the samvetta is one, the difference between the *pramaana-apramaana* (proof-lack of proof) will not exist. A *ghata* (pot) will be established and a *pata* (piece of cloth) will be experienced. The *pratyaya* (belief), ‘This – the Atma, is That – the Brahman’, is not possible in the principle of the Kshanik Vignan (knowledge about the temporary – the Buddhist school of thought).

Thus, the memory of *poorva-vignaana* (previously acquired knowledge) – which is called *pratyabhignaa* – is absolutely authentic and ascertained. Therefore, the *nitya svabhaava* (essential nature that is eternal) Atma is the samvetta.

The truth of the matter is, without the existence of the Atma that establishes, even *pramaana* (proof; something established) will become *a-pramaana* (un-established as a fact), because then, everything will become *kshanika* (momentary; fleeting) and *anishchita* (uncertain). How will *kaarya-kaarana* (effect-cause) be established in Gnan that is momentary? How will

the seed of memory exist? How will the *karana* (that results in the *karya*) be destroyed? If it is not destroyed, how can there be a cause for an effect that is destructible? Then, how can a *bhaava-parampara* (a succession of things being created) continue from *abhava* (non-existence)?

If *karya* (the effect; the perception of the world) is not destroyed, how will it be *kshanik*? Something that can remain in the next moment can also remain for a hundred moments.

The purport is that all the *bhaava* (the objects of the world that are not eternal) are *sthira* (stable; steady). There is no *abhava* of the *bhava*. Nothing is transient from the viewpoint of Atma-Gnan. Even the *baadhya-baadhaka* (tying-that which ties) feeling is not established without a *nishchaya* (decision; conclusion). What meaning will it have, to remove the *bhraanti* (false understanding) that the silver that glimmers in mother-of-pearl is not actually silver, if this knowledge is not retained? Gnan is one and it is eternal. It is not that one is transient, or that Gnan is multiple.

It is said in the *Satkarya Siddhi* that if every *vignaana* (acquired Gnan) was independent, one could not get the *samve'dana* (perception; knowledge) of the other, and therefore, there is a *gnaataa* (one who knows) of the previous state as well as the later states, and this knower becomes the *aashraya* (refuge) of interaction through the different *vrittis*.

It is an unborn Gnan that investigates the knowledge of multiple *vritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts). The statement of the Gita (15.5) is absolutely correct that it is the one *che'tana* (consciousness) that is the cause of *smriti*, Gnan, and *apohana*, meaning, memory, knowledge and the intellect that dispels doubt and wrong thinking. It is a waste of time to argue with crooked dialectics who argue for the sake of argument.

What is the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of the *samve'ttaa* (the intellect that perceives)? That, which perceives everything is like the thread that holds together the beads in a necklace, like *sukha-dukha*, *raaga-vairaagya* (attachment-detachment), *moha-prabodha* (deluded thinking-right thinking) etc. 'I was *sukhi* before, I am *dukhi* now.' *Sukha* and *dukha* are separate, but the 'I' who experiences them is not separate. It is this 'I' who experiences *smriti* (memories) and examines the personal experiences.

Even in these states, the samvetta is not *saavarana* (covered up), because these states are mere ambiguities and they are transient. The samvetta is separate from them.

The *aavarana* (covering) of *avidyaa* (nescience; identification with the body) is an *uparaaga* (darkening influence) like the moon darkening the sun in an eclipse. A rope hidden by darkness does not become a snake; nor is it destroyed by the darkness. In the same way, avidya cannot harm the Atma in any way – this is stated by Bhartruhari.

The Samvit Prakash says, ‘The nature of a crystal is utterly transparent, but it seems to be red due to a red hibiscus placed close to it. Similarly, the form of Bhagwan Samvetta is completely transparent, but is seen in different forms because it gets attached to different objects. Just as the crystal does not get colored, the Samvit remains unaffected. The Atma-Samvit does not give up its essential form even when it takes on the hues of association.’

The thing is, whatever is seen, is the *vilaasa* (sensual pleasure) of the Atma-Samvit. The pristine experience does not abandon its true form because of any influence of the variety of forms; it remains pristine. A white cloth got a dab of color; the color was washed off. Another spot of color was splashed on it and that got washed off too. The cloth remained white. Similarly, the *shuddha che`tana* (pure consciousness) glimmers in the forms of its attachments, but remains pure. It is explained beautifully that in blue-yellow, sukha-dukha, etc there is only the un-fragmented *chit-svaroopaa* (essence of pure consciousness). The different *upaadhee* (attributes; superimpositions connected to something) and alternatives show it in different forms.

The swarup of that, which is separate from the ambiguities, is explained in the fifth Karika.

*Na dukham na sukham yatra na graahyam graahakam na cha,
na chaasti moodhabhaavopi tadasti paramaarthatah. 5*

This Spanda Tattva is the Paramartha because it is *nitya* (eternal). It contains neither *aadhyaatmika* (metaphysical; spiritual) dukha etc, nor the

sukha obtained from the objects of the senses. The *ghata-pata* (objects like a pot or piece of cloth) are also not absorbed by it. It is not that 'I am the natural *ahankaara* (subtle pride of individuality)', the individual consciousness that absorbs these things, because ahankara is not possible without avidya.

In this, the purpose is not to show the *abhaava* (non-existence) of the ahankara of the *adhishtaataa* (the one who governs) who absorbs is not the desired object, because he already knows. The Tattva-Varga states that the Paramartha contains neither the *graahya* (that, which is absorbed) nor the *graahaka* (the one who absorbs). Without the Gnan of the Paramartha, even our own shadow seems to be an *aabhaasa* (illusion).

Then, is the Spanda Tattva *moodha* (inert) or *shoonya* (empty; a vacuum), like a stone?

No! No! He is not *jada* (without consciousness); He is *sva-prakaasha* (self-revealing), and *sarvaavabhaasaka* (the one who reveals everything). Just as the period between the summer and winter is neither hot nor cold, the time between sukha and dukha contains neither sukha nor dukha, but He is present in both.

The Tattva Stuti makes a statement. 'Just as the sun rises in the sky without any feeling of being separate from the sky, a person is aware of his own existence without having to be told about it. The general cannot be pointed out without the specific, just as a community cannot be shown without any individual. However, it cannot be said that the general is not from a community at all!'

The *svasamve`dana - samve`dya* (perception of one's own existence – being aware of existing) is the nitya, shuddha swarup of the Self. Sukha-dukha is of no importance in it.

Furthermore, Nagarjuna has also said, 'All *aalambana* (supporting factors), Dharma, Tattva, and everything that is completely free of every cause of *kle`sha* (distress; agitation) – that Tattva is actually not shoonya.'

The Alokamala speaks about this Tattva in a different way. 'It is the opposite of *tamo-vritti* (the tendencies of Tamo guna that cause sloth and

deluded thinking), and therefore, never allows any scope for Tamo-vritti. This is truly an *avigne`ya avasthaa* (a state that cannot be known) for an ordinary person, and we call it the *shoonya*. Our shoonya does not have the same meaning as the shoonya used in the common parlance of the *naastika* (atheists). He is not jada; and He definitely is.'

The next shlokas speak about this.

Yatah karanavargoyam vimoodhaa moodhavatsvayam,

sahaantare`na chakre`na pravritti-sthiti-sahriteeh. 6

Labhate`tat prayatne`na pareekshyam tattvamaadaraat,

yatah svatantrataa tasya sarvatre`yamakritrimaa. 7

It is because of this Spanda Tattva that the five external sense organs and five organs of action combine with the *antahkarana* (the fourfold mind – or subtle body – composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations; thoughts, and *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality) which is conscious, but is not consciousness, and obtains the states of *pravritti* (activity), *sthiti* (sustained situation), and *samhaara* (destruction).

You have seen how iron is activated by a magnet. If an iron ball is put in fire, the contact with the fire and air makes it glow red like the fire. Just think – how can He, who has the capacity to make other objects conscious, remain *nissvabhaava* (without existence)?

The purport of this is that all effort is connected to Gnan. A body that knows nothing becomes nothing more than a lump of clay. It is certain that there is a substratum that holds every insensate object, else, why doesn't a stone stay suspended in mid-air?

Thus, it is necessary to examine this Tattva with *udyoga* (effort) and *shraddhaa* (faith). Give thought to these words of a *siddha purusha* (enlightened Mahatma) – 'The Brahman is *adrishya* (not seen), like the eyes and – like the eyes – it is the *drashtaa* (the one who sees). He is obtained by Himself; He cannot be obtained the way any object like a pot, is obtained.

The state of the Brahman is natural and independent. Just as It is independent in giving consciousness to the whole of Creation, and everything that is perceived. Independence is the capability of His wish.'

See the logic of this *vive`ka* (discrimination; separation):

Naheechchaanodanasyaayam pre`rakatve`na vartate`,

api tvaatmabalasparshaat purushastatsamo bhavet` 8

This *jeevaatmaa-purusha* (the Atma in an individual body) is not only the independent karta of dispatching wishes, or prompting the organs to act, He is Himself the *sarvagna* (all-knowing) *sarva-kartaa* (the one who does everything). This is because of a touch of the power of His *nir-aavarana* (naked – unconcealed) *chid-roopa* (conscious form) *gnaatavya* (having Gnan), *kartritva* (the subtle pride of being the doer), etc.

Up till now, the absolute independence of the Atma has been described. If the disturbance caused by the *abhimaana* (pride) were to be reduced, that would be excellent!

The next Karika is:

Nijaashuddhaasamarthasya kartavye`shvabhilaashinah,

yadaa kshobhah praleeye`ta tadaa syaatparamam padam. 9

Avidya is *anaadee* (eternal; without a beginning), based on the *ashuddha* (impure) and *avive`ka* (absence of discrimination between the eternal and the transient). It is filled with the mire of desire for sensual pleasures. It constricts the power of the Atma, making it helpless. Then the person starts wanting to undertake many actions for fulfilling his desires. This is agnan. Shri Satvat has said that agnan, *parichhinnataa* (separateness; fragmentation), being sukhi or dukhi, all these come into the all-knowing Atma Tattva, because the Atma takes the *aalambana* (support) of the *karma-chakra* (the wheel of Karma that gives results leading to more karmas in an unending cycle).

Other Shastras call this *gamanaagamana* (repeated coming and going; birth and death), Prakriti (Nature), *ashuddhi* (impurity), *karma-vaasanaa* (avid

desire for activity), *maayaa* (the Ishwara's power of illusion), *avidyaa* (nescience), *bhrama* (false understanding), *moha* (deluded thinking), *agnan*, *mala* (dirt), etc. Even though Prakriti and the Purusha (Atma) are anadi, Prakriti is a form of Maya and dissolves, whereas the Atma-Samvit remains as it is.

It is written in the Samvit Prakash that Maya's intrinsic quality is that it is removed as soon as a person gets the direct personal experience of the Tattva. As soon as a person realizes that the object that looked like a snake is actually a coiled rope, there is no question of his mistaking it for a garland or anything else.

*Maayaatvame`tade`va syaannaashastattvapradarshanaat,
nahi vignaatarajjvaatmaa sarpaadeenmanyate`punah.*

It has been said that when you give serious thought to the subject – the feeling that anything other than your Self actually exists – this feeling vanishes like a cloud formation that looks like a celestial city. Only you remain. That is why your name is *she`sha* (that, which remains at the end).

*Tvatto dviteeyamiha vastu yadasti kinchit
tattadvichhaarapadaveemavataaritam che`t,
gandharvapattanamivopalayam prayaati tvam shishyase`dhruvamatastava
she`shasangnaa.*

Vidyapati has said, 'It is the nature of Samadhi to devour *vishaya* (objects of the senses).'

When a person attains Samadhi through the proper process, it eats up the perception of sense objects. Then, he is given the title of '*sarva-bhoktaa*' (one who consumes everything), and he gets the experience that only he remains; everything else is devoured.

Maya stays in the conjuror who creates the illusions. That means Maya cannot create any false understanding in the buddhi of the *maayaavi* (one who creates the illusion). Maya does not give dukha to its *aashraya* (refuge). Its form is like smoke of a fire, or dust on a mirror, or bubbles in

water. The *nirvikaara* (that, which is not subject to deterioration) remains nirvikara.

Bhakshanaprakritinaa samaadhinaa yuktito vishayaghaamni bhakshite`,

sarvabhakshapadaveemupe`yushah shishyase` paramabhakshito bhavaan.

Saa che`ndrajaalino maaye`vaasthitaa baadhakaatmani,
yathaagne`rdhoomale`khe`va malavad darpanasya vaa,

budbudaah salilasye`va tachcchaantau nirvikaaritaa.

What is this *kshobha* (distress)? It is a *vikaara* (distortion) caused by mental impurity. It has only one form – the feeling of Aham (I) for the *de`ha* (gross physical form; the body). It is destroyed when a person uses *vive`ka* (discrimination between the eternal and the transient), and the strength of the Atma to remove this *kshobha*. Then, the person obtains the *parama-pada* (highest level), which means, he gets established in his own swarup.

According to the Saddhatu Sameeksha, the interactive world is caused by actions that are driven by moha. The end of moha and the end of karmas is the same thing. This is true *shaanti* (inner peace) and *svasthataa* (being fully healthy).

See this comment in the Narad Sangraha – ‘Just as a roasted seed does not sprout, a mind that is empty of *vikalpas* (options; indecision) becomes free of the cycle of rebirth. This is achieved gradually by a regular practice of reducing *kshobha*.’

The Sambodh states that just as a vessel cools once the fire in it is removed, a person gradually experiences Kaivalya (a state where he is conscious only of the Self) when he throws out the slime of agnan, and cleanses the vessel of his mind.

The Shangunya Vivek says that the only difference between the Atma and the Paramatma is that the Aham-bhava – the feeling of individuality – is contracted by avidya (in the Atma that is attached to a body; an individual), with the result that the Atma-Samvit Paramatma (the pure consciousness of the Atma that is not separate from the Paramatma) seems to be separate, in spite of being one. It is like someone who feels frightened in a dream,

while he sees the dream, even though the person has nothing to fear from anything seen in a dream.

When you believe any object to be 'mine', a false fear arises in you. As soon as you understand 'this object is a dream', the fear will be dispelled. In the same way, the feeling, 'I am the form of the Paramatma' destroys the *ahankaara-granthi* (the imaginary knot that ties the Atma to the body), and you see yourself as the same essence as the Paramatma.

The Samvit Prakash gives the logic, 'All the karmas are done by you and the karmas are you. If there is no *ahankaara* (subtle pride of individuality), only you remain. It is the Aham-bhava that creates the feeling of being separate from the Paramatma. If this Aham-bhava is destroyed by the practice of cultivating a feeling of oneness with the Paramatma, there is only oneness.

The *guna* (good qualities) of a person who is established in his own swarup, and has complete mental health, are described in the next shloka.

Tadaasyaakritrimo dharmo gnatva-kartritvalakshanah,

yatastadeepsitam sarvam jaanaati cha karoti cha. 10

The Atma becomes established in Its swarup when kshobha is destroyed, and Its *sahaja svabhaava* (essential nature) manifests. The essential nature of the Atma is *sarvagnataa* (being all-knowing), and *sarvakartritva* (being the doer of everything). The Atma can know whatever It wants to. It can do whatever It wants – for Itself and for others. This *sahaja dharma* (natural quality) of the Atma is called the *vive`kaja gnaana* – knowledge born from vivek, in the Pancha Ratna.

What happens when this Gnan arises?

Then, the Atma becomes *sarvagna* (all-knowing), *sarva-darshee* (able to see everything), *sarve`shavara* (the Ishwara – ruler – of all), and *sarva-shakti* (all-powerful). It exists even without the *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of actions).

For example, Agni (fire) does not think about what is worth burning. In the same way, the Atma does not think about which Gnan is to be obtained, because It is, Itself, *bodha-svaroopaa* (the essence of Gnan). The Shangunya

Vivek says that *bodha* (incandiscent understanding) needs no help from any other for creating different objects; it creates innumerable objects merely by its resolve.

Some people are of the opinion that *gnaatritva* (the subtle pride of being the one who knows) and *kartritva* (the subtle pride of being the doer) came into the Atma through some foreign substance. The fact is these people consider the Atma to be *aneeshvara* (not having any ruler). The Agam Rahasya says that those who believe that the actions of the Ishwara are done with the help of other causes refute the very existence of the Ishwara. It is like calling a man who is captivated by someone else's wife, '*kaame`shvara*' (the Ishwara of lust)!

The eleventh shloka gives the method of stabilizing this natural Dharma.

Tamadhishthaatribhaave`na svabhaavamavalokayan,
smayamaana ivaaste`yastasye`yam kusritih kutah. 11

A person who sees himself as the nature of the Atma – meaning, the substratum that is the self-effulgent, all-pervading form of pure consciousness – is always in a tranquil frame of mind, like a flower in full bloom. The agitated world no longer seems real to him, because his avidya has been removed. This is an elevated level of a Yogi. He experiences everything as a *drashtaa* (onlooker). The Ishtopadesha says, 'My child, give up the conviction that everything you see from your viewpoint is real. Look at That, by which you see. Once you see That (the Atma), you will see everything.'

Yadidam drishyate`drishtyaa graham putraatra santyaja,
ye`na pashyasi tam pashya yam drishtvaa pashyase`khilam.

When a person reaches that stage, he is not captivated by the artistry of this creation. He always remains established in his swarup. He is the *satya sankalpa eeshvara* (the ruler of all, whose every resolve becomes a reality).

All sorrows are removed by *abhyaasa* (practice) and *bhaavanaa* (feeling). *Rasaayana* (a chemical compound) does not need to be tasted; its very knowledge bestows *siddhi* (success). 'Prabhu! Even simple cowherds,

children, and women know You, but You don't give them Mukti because they lack *saadhana* (a method for spiritual progress), or *yukti* (being united with You). The milk inside a cow does not satisfy hunger or thirst; it satisfies hunger and thirst only when it is drunk.'

The next two Karikas are meant to refute the claim of the *shoonya-vaadi* (those who believe that shoonya, or nothing, is the ultimate reality).

Naabhaavo bhaavyataame`ti na cha tatraastyamoodhataa,

yatobhiyogasamsparshaat tadaaseediti nishchayah. 12

Atastatkitrimam gne`yam saushuptapadavat sadaa,

na tve`vam smaryamaanatvam tattatvam pratipadyate`. 13

Abhaava (non-existence) is like horns on a rabbit! Thus, since it is an *a-vastu* (non-existent object), it can never be something that can be experienced. Abhava is a *moodha-avasthaa* (a state of being inert); it is not *che`tanaa* (consciousness). The touch of desires creates a feeling of abhava in it, and the feeling passes. Then, the meaning comes, 'That was my shoonya avastha (a state of being nothing).'

The question is also asked, 'Does this bhava – by which abhava is negated – exist, or not? Who can cut away the feeling of *sad-bhaava* (pure existence) that blocks the feeling of abhava?' Meaning, the Atma exists, and it is *chinmaya* (conscious). It is through the Atma that everything, including the feeling of abhava, is experienced.

Abhaavo ye`na bhaave`na baadhyate`sti na naasti sah,

tasya bhaavasya sadbhaavo vada ke`na nivaaryate`,

sostyatashchinmayo bhaavo ye`na sarvam vibhaavyate`.

This is why the feeling of abhava is artificial and transient. It is like the *sushupti avasthaa* (deep sleep state). Had it not been so, it would not have been possible for the person to remember that he had been sleeping. It is because of this *avasthaa* (state) that the extremely effulgent Atma becomes a subject of *smriti* (memory). The Atma sees something, and remembers; therefore, it is *chid-roopa* (the form of consciousness), and

nitya-udita (always arisen). It is for this reason that a person should first get *upade'sha* (teaching) from his Guru, and then give it deep and respectful thought.

Up to now, it seems as though there are two states – one is the *smartaa* (one who remembers) – and one is the *smartava* (that, which is remembered). In these, which is *nitya* (eternal) and which is *anitya* (transient)? The next Karika explains this.

Avasthaayugalam chaatra kaarya-kartritvashabditam,

kaaryataa kshayinee tatra kartritvam punarakshayam. 14

The two states in the Spanda Tattva are: *kaarya-kartaa* (the action-the doer of the action), *bhogy-bhoktaa* (that, which is enjoyed-the one who enjoys), and *drishya-drashtaa* (that, which is perceived-the one who perceives). They can also be called the *ve'dya-ve'daka* (the known-the knower). The one who is responsible for this false supposition is subject to deterioration. It is subject to being created and destroyed; whereas the shuddha karta, bhokta, and drashta – meaning, the one who gives this awareness – is eternal. He is He is *nir-baadha* (cannot be negated), *nir-avadhi* (without the limitations of time), and *chit-svaroopaa* (the essence of consciousness).

Therefore,

Kaaryonmukhah prayatno yah ke'valam sotra lupyate',

tasminllupte' viluptosmeetyabudhah pratipadyate'. 15

When the group (of sense objects and the organs of action) that works in the external world starts becoming weak, the activities of the *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of action) cease. An *agnaani* (one who lacks Gnan) thinks that it is he who is destroyed.

The fact is consciousness is never destroyed. It has also been said, 'Consciousness is not destroyed when the body is destroyed.'

Why is that?

Na tu yontarmukho bhaavah saarvagnaadigunaaspadam,

tasya lopah kadaachit syaadanyasyaanupalambhanaat. 16

It is only the *kaarya* (effect; the transient objects in this world) – that is subject to the divisions of space and time – which is given up. The *bhaava* (feeling) that is turned inward does not spread in the outer world. The basic nature that is always established in its own essence is the *aashraya* (refuge) of qualities like *sarvagnataa* (being all-knowing), and this feeling is never removed.

Why is it never removed?

It is because nothing, except the *chid-roopa* (the form of consciousness) is obtained. It is present always and everywhere.

It is said, 'It is You (the Atma; pure consciousness), who is seen as the object that is not separate from the objects that are separated by space, time actions and forms, because You are beyond all of them.'

This also shows that there is no difference between *sarvagnataa* (being all-knowing), Gnan, etc, because they are all states of the chid-roop Gnan. The Shanguna Vivek says, 'At the *aadi-anta* (beginning-end) of all gunas (tendencies) there is only Gnan. The conclusion of the Tattva is reached by this knowledge. Shaktis like *bala* (strength), *veerya* (valor), *oja* (brilliance), etc are accepted as forms of Dharma.'

In the Kakshya Stotra it is said that the external shakti is called avidya, and Gnan is called sarvagnata. Bala is the cause of *tripti* (satiation), and the *anaadi-bodha* (eternal Gnan) is *te`ja* (effulgence); therefore, teja is the root of bala.

Teja is the *prabhaava* (influence; majesty) that makes others bend before it. It is the *vilaasa* (worldly pleasure) of *bodha* (Gnan), since it is *ve`dya* (something that can be known and understood), and it makes the world subservient to it. This teja is the Ishwara, and its independence is its *aishvarya* (the power to govern).

This Samvid-Atma is independent of everything that is done. It is neither the organizer nor the cause of restriction. It is the Ishwara who is present in both *pravritti* (activity) as well as *nivritti* (inactivity). It is an indestructible

shakti that never disappears. Its valor is that it its Atma-sattaa is never sullied. It is not connected to the *kaarya* (effect; the world); it simply is. Gold is not put into the jewelry; the jewelry is gold. Every grain of gold is gold

Who obtains this Samvid-Atma?

Tasyopalabdhiih satatam tripadaavyabhicharinee,

nityam syaatsuprabuddhasya tadaadyante` parasya tu. 17

A Yogi has an unbroken *upalabdhi* (attainment) of the Atma that is pure consciousness.

What is a Yogi like?

A Yogi is one who is always alert, always aware.

What kind of an upalabdhi does he get?

It is the consciousness that remains in all three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. It is never removed. He is never deluded by worldly considerations, even while working in the world.

It has been said, 'There is no *avasthaa* (state; condition) where the Samvit is not present.' Therefore, Yogis always do the worship of the *chid-ghana-svaroopa* (the dense essence of consciousness of the Self). Even if a Yogi is not fully *prabuddha* (enlightened) he experiences the Samit at the beginning and conclusion of any work. The state at the start and end of every action is always *chinmaya* (having consciousness). In the in-between state an action seems to be some other form, even though it is the form of consciousness.

The purport of this could also be that the beginning, end, and middle, waking and dreaming states of an enlightened Yogi are filled with a clear awareness of the Samvit.

Where, and in which form is the Paramatma for a Yogi?

Gnaanagne`yasvaroopinyaa shaktyaa paramayaa yutah,

padadvaye` vibhurbhaati tadanyatra tu chinmayah. 18

The chid-roopa Paramatma pervades everything, is everywhere, and has all the supreme powers. He shines in the waking and dreaming states. His

shakti is Gnan as well as *gne`ya* (that, which can be known), which is why it works differently in both states.

There are two kinds of *upalabdhi* (attainments). Apart from these two states of waking and dreaming, the Paramatma abides in the states of *sushupti* (deep sleep) and *tureeya* (the fourth state where the Atma and Paramatma become one). He remains as pure consciousness because there is no *gneye* in these two states of deep sleep and merging into the Paramatma; there is only the essence of Gnan.

The question is: where is any *upalabdhi* possible, when the guna-spanda and other objects are all present?

This doubt – like a stain – is removed in the next shloka.

Gunaadispendanishyandaah saamaanyaspandasambhayaat,

labdhaatmalaabhaah satatam syurnasyaaparipanthinah. 19

The three gunas of Sattva, Raja and Tama, and the great *ahankaara* (the ‘I’ that is the Atma) that creates a spanda (pulsation); sukha, dukha, moha etc are ripples in this flow. They obtain *sattaa* (existence) when they get the support of the infinite specific factors within the general spanda, and therefore, they create no disturbance in the swarup of a Yogi who has obtained Tattvagnan. Just as the juice extracted from a flower does not hide the nature of the flower, the flow of the Spanda is like the pollen of a lotus. A *siddha* (enlightened person) has said, ‘A *prakaashya* (that which illuminates) is not seen in a palace of *prakaasha* (light). The *samve`dya* (that, which is known) is also the form of the Samvid, in the infinite Samvid.’

The Matanga Parameshwara affirms this. ‘The extended path from Shiva to the world is attained by the *chid-vastu* (the object that is consciousness), and known by only the *chid-vastu*. This is the purport of the Gita calling Maya (the power of illusion) ‘*daivee*’ (pertaining to the divine).

For the *agna* (one who lacks Gnan) –

Aprabuddhadhiyastve`te` svasthitisthaganodyataah,

paatayanti duruttaare` ghore` sansaaravartmani. 20

These same gunas of Sattva, Raja and Tama, and the ahankara that is the cause of sukha, dukha, moha, etc become the *aachhaadaka* (covering that hides) of the chit-swarup for a *moodha* (one whose intellect is stupefied) person, because such a person sees himself as having three gunas; not as a

shuddha-buddhi (one whose intellect is unsullied by the gunas). He is like a child who smudges a clean mirror by breathing on it. An agnani sullies his *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) with the result that the gunas send him into the stream of repeated births. This stream is filled with suffering; getting out of it is extremely difficult.

The Gnan Samboda says that even though the Gnani as well as the agnani are moved by the shakti of the gunas one is independent whereas the other is enslaved. A person whose intellect is pure remains free, like an uninvolved observer, even in adverse circumstances; but the agnani is like a blind man, dependent on others, even when walking on level land.

Now, the method by which an agnani can cross over the ocean of this sansara is explained.

Atah satatamudyuktah spandatattvaviviktaye`,

jaagride`va nijam bhaavamachire`naadhigachhati. 21

The currents of the Spanda are always ready to cause the downfall of an agnani, and therefore, a person should always strive to discriminate between the Spanda Tattva and his own nature which is subject to distortion. This leads to the swarup manifesting. Truly our own swarup is the one who endeavors and expands. It is Shiva! *Udyoga* (effort) is called 'Shiva' in the stotras eulogizing Shiva.

That is why such a person quickly attains his own swarup in the waking state. The person who perseveres keeps alert. In this, the *vive`ka* (discrimination) is, 'I am the swarup of the non-dual, shuddha bodha. This world is an expanse of my swarup. It is my *vilaasa* (pleasurable play); it is my smile! It is my *vaibhava* (splendor).'

When such Gnan is attained, a person gets the *vishvaasa* (staunch faith) that he remains the Maheshwara even in the midst of all the *vikalpa* (options; uncertainties). It is stated in the Pancha Ratna that when a person sees all beings as the Atma, and sees himself in them as well as separate from them, he becomes free of the cycle of rebirth. Elsewhere it is written, 'O Sir! You are the *nirmala* (unsullied) *ananta* (endless) *e`kamaatra* (one and only) *bodha svaroop*a (the form of incandescent understanding). An enlightened person sees you as the *gnaataa* (knower) as well as the *gne`ya* (known).'

There is a statement in the Tattvartha Chinatamani that says, 'The swarup of a Yogi rises when the darkness of moha is completely destroyed by the

use of vivek. He remains immersed in his *paramaananda svaroop*a (essence that is supreme bliss) in every situation, because he has rejected the *anaatma-bhaava* (feeling of being anything other than the Atma). Such a Yogi has grasped the vivek of the *drashtaa-drishya* (the seer-that, which is seen). There is no moment, or grain of this world, where he does not exist. The *bhava-roga* (disease of being a part of the mortal world) is removed. He is in Samadhi even in his *vyuthaana* (uprising; revolt). The Laxmi (goddess of Grace and prosperity) that is Moksha is his daughter!

*Ittham tattadanalpa-mohadalana-praaptasvaroopodayo yogee
nityamanaatmabhaavavirahaat svaatmasthitao nirvritah,*

*drishya-drishtravive`kavidbhavapadavyaapee vimuktaamayo vyutthaane`pi
samaadhibhaag bhavati sanmokshashriyah kaaranam.*

Those who don't have Gnan are unable to understand that the *sfurnaa* (springing forth) of his *svabhaava* (intrinsic nature) is only in his waking state. That is why those states are now described, in which the Spanda is indicated clearly.

Atikruddhah prahrishhto vaa kim karomeeti vaa mrishan,

dhaavanvaa yat padam gachhe`ttatra spandah pratishthitah. 22

When *krodha* (anger) arises because of *dve'sha* (aversion) the person first reaches a certain state. A person whose heart is pure reaches a state of happiness when he sees a person he loves. A person who has a dilemma about his duties, and is undecided about what he should do first, ponders upon the matter and takes a decision. Another person rushes blindly to his lover when she calls him. The natural Spanda of people is seen in these states.

The Spanda Tattva is seen clearly whenever, and in whichever state all the shaktis are dissolved. The reason for this is that all the grounds of dukha show up when anger overcomes a person; and all the grounds of sukha show up when there is happiness. The questions, 'What should I do? What should I not do?' are caused by moha, and all the inclinations of the senses begin to run amok as a result.

The Vignan Bhairav says, 'At the end of *krodha* is *bhaya* (fear), *shoka* (sorrow), *shoonya aranya* (empty desert). When a lustful activity is suddenly stopped, when in the midst of heavy fighting, when an amazing spectacle is seen, at the end of acute hunger and thirst, the *brahm-sattaa*

(the existence of the Brahman) is always very close, but it is not recognized.'

The Rahasya Stotra says that at the peak of helplessness, in anger, or in happiness, and in the debate between what should be done and what should not be done, the state before a definite feeling comes – it is there that the Spanda sets its power into motion. A touch of *sarvagnataa* (being all-knowing) and *sarva-shaktimattaa* (being all-powerful) is experienced in this most subtle, fleeting moment. For a fleeting second the feeling rises in that person that he is all-knowing, the doer of everything, and the ruler of all. You can examine these principles respectfully, at the instructions of your Guru.

The method of awakening this Spanda Tattva in your life is given next.

Yaamavasthaam samaalambya yadaayam mama vakshyati

tadavashyam karishye`hamiti sankalpaya tishthati. 23

Taamaashrityordhvamaarge`na soma-sooryaavubhaavapi,

saushumne`dhvanyastamito hitvaa brahmaandagocharam. 24

Tadaa tasmin mahaavyomni praleenashashi-bhaaskare`,

saushuptapadavanmoodhah prabuddhah syaadanaavritah. 25

'This is my Gurudev! He is the jewel in the crown among Gnanis. He can even describe the *sad-vastu* (object that is pure existence) that is undescribable! Nobody can flout his command. I will definitely do what he tells me to do.'

When a *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) makes this firm resolve, and takes the support of a favorable inclination, remaining steady in his endeavor, a flow is started in the higher regions, that *soma* (the moon), *soorya* (the sun), *apaana* (one of the winds in the body), *praana* (life-sustaining breath), *mana-praana* (the wind that gives life to the mana), etc all pass through the path of the *sushumnaa* (central and main channel of subtle energy), and dissolve.

'I don't know what *aagnaa* (command) Gurudev will give.' This curiosity crushes *vaasanaa* (avid desire). At that time the *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) gives up the feeling of being a body in the world. He becomes free of the *aham-bhaava* (the subtle ego of individuality).

It is also stated, 'The lamp of false belief – of identification with the body – is dimmed. The person feels one with the infinite limpid ocean of the Samvit. The group of indriyas (five sense organs and five organs of action) turns inwards. You are only an *adviteeya vishvaatmaa* (the non-dual Atma of the whole world).' In such a state, the sun and the moon – Gnan and *kriyaa* (action) – all become *shaanta* (at peace; inactive) in the vast space of pure consciousness. No individual nature is perceived. The person is not deluded by the states of dreaming and waking. His state is like the deep sleep state where there is no enlightenment and no obstacles, but this state is without the *aavarana* (covering) of avidya that hides (the truth; the Atma).

The Rahasya Stotra says, 'Even the great *siddha purusha* (people who have attained supernatural powers) who have immersed their *soorya-soma* – meaning, Gnan-kriya – into their Atma Samvit, and have crossed the *vyoma maarga* (path of space), and have applied the *anjana* (lamp black applied to the eyes) of *bhaavanaa* (feeling) can also reflect Your swarup.'

The Niranjana Tattvodaya says that the quieting of the winds of prana-avana is the method for obtaining Atma-darshan (a glimpse of the Atma). The Bhoga Moksha Pradeepika also states, 'The fulfillment of desires is achieved by the rising up of soma-soorya in the *hridaya* (heart), and the *niranjana tattva* (the essence of the untainted Atma) is achieved by their quieting. This is the quintessence of the Shastras. It is in this state that the *sahaja mantra* (natural mantra) arises.'

The Bauddhayan Samhita states, 'When the moon subsides and the sun does not rise, that is when all the Devtas (indriyas) dissolve, and all the mantras arise.' This opinion is shared by the Malini Vijay: 'The state in which a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) becomes free of any other support, and merges into his swarup, is the *kshe`tra* (place; area) where all the mantras are created.' Furthermore, 'When a person's chitta becomes blocked between Dharma-adharma, whatever he says becomes a mantra. It is not that mantras made of vowels and consonants are the only mantras.'

Therefore,

*Tadaakramya balam mantraah sarvagnabalashaalinah,
pravartante`dhikaaraaya karanaaneeva de`hinah. 26.*

There are four important points in a mantra – *beeja* (seed), *pinda* (body), *pada* (word), and *naama* (name). Their Dharma (essential nature) is

manana (meditation) and *traana* (protection). Their *bala* (strength; power) is the *ullaasa* (splendor) of the *nir-aavarana* (exposure) of the chitta, meaning, the Para Shakti (divine Power). It is with this Shakti that mantras use the innate power of sound, and open up the meaning, and light up. Powers like being able to know whatever the person wants to know, come from mantras.

When a *siddha-mantri* (a person who has attained power over a mantra) uses a mantra he becomes capable of *anugraha* (bestowing benefits) and *nigraha* (restrain). Just as a person uses his hands and feet, a *mantragna* (one who has Gnan about the mantra) can use the latent power of the mantra. The Trikasar says that once a person gets the bodha of the formless Param Tattva – which is beyond the *varna* (words) – the mantras become the servants of those who control them. Mantras would remain mere letters if they were not given a touch of the power of the *satya-sankalpa* (an unfailing resolve) of the Chit-Shakti.

The Hansa Parameshwara states, ‘The mantras remain like *pashu* (animals; dumb beings) in their form of letters. When they are spoken through the path of the Sushumna (the central channel of subtle energy) they become *pashupati* (Shiva, the Master of all beings).’ Actually, the full accomplishment of mantras is only in the Shakta Marg (the path of worshipping the Brahman in the form of Shakti; the Primordial Mother). It is said, in the Tattva Raksha Vidhan that mantras should not be used in the Atma-Samvit or in the Param Pada (supreme state), because these states are empty of both Shakti and *kriyaa* (action). Mantras should only be used in the matters pertaining to Shakti. Only that *japa* (ritual chanting of a mantra) is successful.

The Shree Vaihayasi says that japa should be done in the *sandhee-sthala* (connecting point) where the sound rises while meditating on the japa, where words are like the warp and woof of the Shakti. This Shakti abides in the vastness of space, and is filled with *parama-amrita* (the supreme elixir). When japa is done by this method the mantra manifests its swarup; it does not conceal itself.

The Shri Kalapara says that *shabda* (words) are *naadaatmaka* (having sound), therefore, the Samvit is connected to belief, and keeps increasing. The Samvit is established in the swarup of the meaning of the mantra; it is not separate from the mantra. Therefore, it also gives Atma-bodha.

The Sankarshan Sutra states that the feeling of consciousness is established in one's own Atma. *Bhaava* (existence) and *abhaava* (non-existence) are its states, its cleansing. It is a self-experienced consciousness. It is beyond Prakriti (Nature; the Ishwara's power of Creation). It is also the *vishaya* (object of the senses) of Prakriti. This is the *pratyayaatmaka kaarana* (the cause that is an implicit belief) of the mantras.

A *yantra* (machine) manifests externally and internally, in the form of *varnas* (letters). They are like the hands and feet of a human being. When joined with *veerya* (valor) they are shown to be successful at any time. When a mantra is chanted even once, with purity and comprehensive understanding, in the inner and outer worlds, it is equal to one *lakh* (hundred thousand) *japas*.

The Jaya Samhita says, 'When one *mantra-naatha* (master of a mantra) of a mantra utters a mantra that arises within and without, and becomes one, that *japa* is to be considered worth one lakh *japas*.' This is how mantra-shakti is explained, and the first arising shown. Now, the *vilaya* (dissolving) is shown.

Tatraiva sampraleeyante`shaantaroopaa niranjanaah,
saha saadhakachitte`n te`naite`shivadharmanih. 27.

At the wish of the *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant), these mantras are dissolved into the form of the *shaktimaana* (the one whose Shakti they contain), because they are the followers of their own nature, and forms of Shakti. This is reiterated in the Kalapara Sutra. Many shaktis abide in the form of the tree of *akshara* (letters). Their variables manifest as forms of Shakti in the *varnas*. They are called 'varana' because they are connected to the mouth. These Shaktis are *shaanta* (dormant) because they are *kritya-kritya* (accomplished; successful), and are *niranjana* (unblemished). Or, you can say that they are activated by the Niranjan Tattva. This is the reason why the Dharma in Shiva-Shankar is also in the mantras, meaning, mantras are also *sarvagna* (all-knowing) and *sarva-kartaa* (the doers of everything).

Mantras become immersed in the chitta of a sadhak. The purport of this statement is that the Atma is Shiva. This is explained logically in the next shloka.

Yasmaat sarvamayo jeevah sarvabhaavasamudbhavah,
tatsamve`danaroope`na taadaatmyapratipattitah. 28.

Te`na shabdaarthachintaasu na saavasthaa na yah shivah,

bhoktaiva bhogyabhaave`na sadaa sarvatra samsthitah. 29.

This *jeeva-aatmaa* (the Atma attached to a body; an individual) is *sarvamaya* (filled with everything), *sarvaatmaka* (the Atma of all), *vishvaroopaa* (the form of this world), because it is the *boddhaa* (the one who has, and gives Gnan). It is also said, 'everything becomes *chinmaya* (filled with consciousness) as soon as a person obtains Tattva-Gnan. There is no part of the *vaidya* (known) that is outside the *ve`daka* (the one who has Gnan). The *vaidya* is the *vedak*. The *vedak* is the *Samvid*. The *Samvid* is the Atma.'

In that case, the most important fact is that the Atma is the *jagat* (world). The shloka of the Chandogya Upanishad states clearly, 'This world, seen as the *idam* (this, as separate from 'I') is the Atma. There are no different objects in the Atma.'

Give thought to one more point. The feeling of *sarva-bhaava* (being one with everything that exists) originates from the Atma. The Para, Pashyanti, and other *vaanee* (kinds of speech) arise from the *Samvid*. The ancient Acharyas have said, 'We have obtained the knowledge that it is You, who is the *kaarana* (cause) of everything, because You pervade everything the way clay pervades every earthen vessel. The world cannot be established without the *Samvit*; the whole world is connected to the *Samvit*. How can the *a-samanvita* (unconnected) be the cause of the world? The *Samvit* is *Sat* (pure existence); the *Sat* is the *Samvit*. Nobody can have the experience that the *Samvit* is the *sarva-sat* (the existence of everything) without doing the *upaasanaa* (loving worship) of the *Samvit*.'

Furthermore, 'All *bhaava* (beings) are Your swarup. There is no difference of opinion regarding this, because they are all perceived. Can the *aprakaashya* (not perceived) be *prakaashita* (perceived)?' And, 'You, the *prakaashaka* (illuminator; the one who enables perception) are one. *Sarjana* (Creation), *bhaashana* (speech), and *bodhana* (knowing) are, all three, Your *prakaasha* (effulgence, that enables perception). You are separate from other sources of light, like the sun, but no other light is seen without Your effulgence. Even the Shrutis and the Panch Ratra state that the effulgence of the sun and the moon are only by Your effulgence.'

The *Samvit* is *sarvamaya*. Another reason is given for this. All the things that are known are known because of the experience of knowing. The person identifies with the things that are known; he feels one with them. It is

written in the Svaatma Saptati that all objects are the subjects of the *gnaana-svabhaava* (the nature of Gnan), and get identified with the nature of Gnan. The *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) is Gnan-swarup, and hence, it is sarvamaya. The Samvit Prakashan states that everything encompassed by fire looks like fire. In the same way, see everything as Gnan, because all things are encompassed by Gnan.

The Agam Rahasya says, 'All forms are perceived by Gnan, and therefore, the *vibhooti* (grandeur) of the world is Gnan. The fact that You are the world is not only reiterated by the Shastras, but also because of the knowledge obtained by the Atma-Samvit. You are also established by direct personal experience.'

It is the Samvit that assumes the form of speech, through being experienced. The Samvid is the Vaikhari, Madhyama, Pashyanti as well as the form of the Para Vani. The *vaktaa* (speaker) of all four vanis is self-created, eternal, without attributes, and eternally established.

The vani shines in the *hridaya* (heart) like the effulgence of the sun. It is filled with knowledge by the Shakti of the *chid-ichhaa* (desire of the consciousness), and gets its power from the power of the Atma

The Pratyabhigna says, 'The *pratyavamarshaatmaa chiti* (enduring multiple beliefs) is the *sarasa* (sweet) Para-vaak. It is an independent magnificence of the Paramatma. It is the *aadhaara* (support; basis) of the all-pervading *mahaa-sattaa* (highest existence) of everything, and it is the hriday of the Parameshwara.' The *antah-sankalpa* (mental resolve) is another form of the Maha Satta, in which the *shabda* (word) and *artha* (meaning) spring forth simultaneously. That is why their *abhe`da* (not being separate) is well-recognized. The author has written that belief cannot arise unless the meaning of the word is understood. It has already been stated that the Samvit is the foundation of the vaak. Just as the whole world is known by the Samvit of one's own Atma, all speech contains the Samvit.

Even Yogi Nath has said that the vani has to be accepted if something is to be established in the Para Tattva, because an object is ascertained by an examination of its form. It is only when the person's *vritti* (mental inclinations) are turned towards it, that a person can imagine the existence of an object. Nobody can obtain the Atma unless they are in this state, because only the *svaroopa-jyoti* (effulgence of the essence) remains. There is no need for divisions or any serial order; its form can be known only by the Yogis. It is with the same turning towards the swarup-jyoti that the

chintanamayee vaagadhaaraa (stream of speech prompted by deep reflection) is created. After that, the wish to speak the specific words about the subject arises, and it manifests in the form of words, to reveal the meaning.

Without the *vani* that is born from the *Samvit*, no meaning can be ascertained.

This is how the *Samvit's sarva-prakaashaka shakti* (power of revealing everything) – that is an inner resolve – emerges as the *varna* (words), *pada* (lines or couplets), or *vaakya* (sentences), and is perceived in the form of the meaning of the speech. This is experienced by the *prabuddha* (those who have Gnan).

It is also said, 'the *chidaatmaa de`va* (the conscious Atma that is the divine power) reveals the inner meaning at his own will. It is just like a Yogi producing objects without any substance. The *svaami* (lord) of the inner existence shows them; nothing can be activated without his wish, or his displeasure.'

It is also said, 'Whatever you see outside is also within you. The world seen outside is just like the mental pictures you see when your eyes are closed.' Thus, it is the *svabhava* (one's own intrinsic nature) that is established in the form of everything. It is because of this *svabhava* – which is the Atma of the all – that when a person reflects on words and their meaning, he finds that no state exists where the *Shiva-bhava* is not seen. Meaning, everything is the form of the *chitta*. Everything is the same in the *Samvid*, everything exists in the *Samvid*.

It is also said, 'The causes from which the rivers of *bhaava* (feelings, or individuals) flow separately, are the very causes for them becoming one in the ocean of *bodha* (comprehensive understanding; Gnan).'

The author has already stated, 'All physical, verbal, and mental interaction has You, as being established in their origin. Therefore, it is absolutely correct to say that the *Samvid Atma* is the *bhoktaa* (the one who enjoys), who is present always and everywhere. There is no substance called *bhoga* (that, which is enjoyed), apart from the *Samvid*.'

The *Shruti* says:

Ahamannamahamannamahamannam,

ahamannaadoahamannaadoahamannaadah.

‘I am the *anna* (food), and I am the bhokta of the anna.’

See what the Tattva Vichar says: The feeling of bhokta and bhoga are combined in the feeling that is present in the svabhava of the individual. They have no separate existence. The *drashtaa* (one who sees), *anubhavitaa* (one who experiences), *smartaa* (one who remembers), *graahaka* (one who takes), *bhoktaa* (one who enjoys), *ve`daka* (one who teaches), *kartaa* (one who does), *upalabdhaa* (one who obtains), *samve`ttaa* (one who knows fully), and *gnaataa* (one who has Gnan) are all names of Gnan.

The purport of this is, it is Gnan that glimmers in the form of the *gne`ya* (that, which is known), and spreads. It is also said, ‘Everything that is seen as separate from you, is actually your own Atma; but because of *moha* (deluded thinking) they appear as objects to be enjoyed. People who are like un-evolved animals wander in the world in search of pleasures. Those who see these *drishya* (perceived objects) as forms of their own *vaibhava* (splendor) become rulers, like You. They have the capacity to subdue the interactive world.’

The Gnan Sambodha says, ‘Gnan is present in three forms – *gnaataa* (the knower), *gne`ya* (the known), and *gnaana* (knowledge). The comment in the Gita – *brahmaarpanam brahmahavi* (4. 24) – (the offerings offered to the Brahman in a Yagna are also the Brahman) is absolutely correct.’

Utpal Acharya has said, ‘Only the *drashtaa* (the one who sees; the Atma) exists. Those who lack Gnan do not see this perceived world as the form of *adhyaatma* (related to the Supreme Spirit). This world is like the reflection seen in a mirror; it is *drishya* (that, which is seen). The Atma is the drashta who sees. They seem to appear in two forms, but actually they are one. It is only through *bodha* (comprehensive understanding) that all external objects are understood to be Gnan of the non-dual Satya. Nowhere does the gneya exist.’

*Drashtaivaasti na drishyame`tadabudhairadhyaatmanaa gnaayate`
aadarshapratibimbavajjagadidam bhinna dvidhaa yaanti yat,*

*sattaam yaanti ghataadayo bahiramee bodhaanuve`dhaat sadaa
gnaanaadvaitamatah svatosti na punargne`yasya satta kvachit.*

The Atma Saptati states that whatever is seen is not separate from the darshan – that, which is seen. The darshan is not separate from the drashta. Therefore, the drashta is the world. Even in the Sankarshan Sootra, it is

written that the drashta – by whom this world is perceived in moving and unmoving forms – is the one who is called ‘Vishnu’.

The Javali Sutra also states that the drashta, *sparshtaa* (one who touches), *shrotaa* (the one who hears), *ghraataa* (the one who smells), *rasayitaa* (the one who tastes), *mantaa* (the one who thinks), *boddhaa* (the one who understands), and the one whose essence of consciousness is never lost, is the one and only cause of Creation, Sustenance, and Dissolution of this world. He is Vasudev, meaning, He is the Atma of all.

See what the Pancha Ratna Upanishad has to say. ‘The *gnaataa-gne`ya* (knower-known), *vaktaa-vaachya* (speaker-what is spoken), *bhoktaa-bhogya* (the one who enjoys- that, which is enjoyed) are all the same one Atma.’ Further on it says, ‘Within everything, everything outside is the effulgence of the Self, known by the Self, and created by the Self.’ Even the Shruti says, ‘He is the gnata and He is Gnan. He is the mantra Atma’, meaning, the mantra is a form of Shiva.

Praising this statement, the method of accepting it is given next.

Iti vaa yasya samvittih kreedaatve`naakhilam jagat,

sa pashyan sarvato yukto jeevanmukto na sanshayah. 30

The use of the word ‘vaa’ in this shloka is in a selfish sense. The purport is, ‘What more is there to elaborate upon? Once a person obtains such Gnan, and the experience of his own swarup, he seems to be in a state of intoxication. It seems as though he considers the world to be a playground, because he is always *mukta* (free) and always *yukta* (connected to his Self).’ The feeling of bondage, caused by agnan, is removed. So, he feels as free of this world as the Ishwara! There is no doubt about this. He is siddha – he has achieved his goal through *upapatti* (cause) and *upalabdhi* (obtaining), so no one should have any false understanding about this.

It is also said, ‘Even if his Atma-bodha relaxes, and he indulges in worldly pleasures, he remains a *jeevana-mukta* (free of identification with the body).’

Those who say that Moksha is not possible without *utkraanti* (rising up) are mistaken. This is why people say, ‘If just anyone was to obtain Kaivalya (a state where only the awareness of the non-dual Atma remains) by mere elevation – without experiencing his *svabhaava* (intrinsic nature) – even a fool who is given the penalty of death by hanging would get Mukti!’

It is also said, 'A person who has not given up his desires for certain good qualities remains *baddha* (bound to the body) even at the time of *pralaya* (Dissolution), when he has to give up his body. However, a living person becomes Mukta with the *aashraya* (refuge) of pure Gnan.'

It is written in the Gnanagarbha, 'O Master of the three worlds! A person who has done Your upasana and destroyed the wrong tendencies that cause mischief gets a surge of the feeling of his advaita swarup very quickly.'

A well-known feeling in enlightened Mahatmas is, 'This whole world is sustained in me.'

*Mayi sthitamidam jagat sakalame`va sarvatra vaa sthitoahamiti
dhaaranaadvitayabhaavanaave`shatah,*

*jagatritayanaatha taanatichire`na sampraapyate` nrimistava saparyayaa
dalitakilbishopaplavaih.*

The same statement is given in the Gita, and is well-known.

The Pancha Ratra has also stated that a person becomes *aschaucha* (beyond grief) when he reaches the highest level of the palace of *pragnaa* (right perception). Such a person sees the people who are caught up in their sorrows the way a man sitting on a high hill views the people in the valley below. Actually, the method of remaining in a liberated state of mind is given here.

The *shiva-bhaava* (feeling of being Shiva) – that is the mantra-Atma is explained now.

Ayame`vodayastasya dhye`yasya dhyaayiche`tasi,

tadaatmataasamaapattimicchatah saadhakasya vaa. 31

This is the rising of the mantra-Atma mentioned above, in the chitta of the one who meditates. The *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) or *dhyaataa* (one who does dhyana) wishes to become one with the mantra-Atma, and ultimately gets an experience of that state.

The Vishva Samhita states that when the chitta becomes merged in the *dhye`ya* (object of meditation), that is called *dhyaana* (meditation). In this, the dhyeya becomes *pratyaksha* (perceived directly), and the person who meditates gets engrossed in the dhyeya. The word *richhatah* is also accepted in place of *ichhata* in the original shloka.

The purport of this is that a regular practice of concentrating on the dhyeya results in feeling one with the object of the meditation. The author of this book accepts both 'iccha' and 'richhata' as appropriate, because the wish to utter the mantra results in identifying with the Devta of the mantra, and is, in fact, because of the *samve'dana* (perception; feeling). The Devta of the mantra manifests in the life of the person through *mantra-nyaasa* depositing complete trust in the mantra).

The fruit of this *vyaapti* (the pervading of the power of the mantra in the person) is given next:

Iyame`vaamritapraaptirayame`vaatmano grahah,

iyam nirvaanadeekshaa cha shivasadbhaavadaayinee. 32

This *svaroopam samve'dana* (perception of one's own swarup) is the obtaining of the *amrita* (elixir) of the Atma. We do not call a break from the cycle of birth and death Mukti; the self-created Atma in the milky ocean is the *anugraha* (Grace; compassion) of the Atma. This is *nirvana-deekshaa* (initiation into eternal bliss). It is merging into the Paramatma.

In the Moksha Dharma it is written that we should let go of all *sankalpa* (mental resolves), and immerse the chitta into the Sattva, the Self. When the chitta merges into the Sattva the person conquers Time. The Atma Sambodh also says, 'Only the Gnan of the *svabhaava samvit* (the perception of the essential nature of the Self) is the method for becoming free of this cycle of rebirth. A mortal becomes immortal by drinking amrita just once!'

The meaning of the word 'deeksha' is the *daana* (voluntary gift) of Gnan that is eternal, and the expelling of all *mala* (impurities). This is done through *bodhaanuvedha* (injecting the right understanding into the mind). In deeksha, the 'd' stands for Gnan and 'ksha' for expulsion.

After describing the natural Spanda Tattva the author describes the rising of the mantra, its influence, and its glory. As soon as the Spanda Tattva arises, the person becomes conscious of his eternal Atma in the waking state, and becomes completely independent.

The next two shlokas explain that this also happens in the dream state.

Yathe`chchhaabhyarthito dhaataa jaagrityarthaan hridi sthitaan,

soma-sooryodayam kritvaa sampadayati de`hinah. 33

Tayaa svapne`pyabheeshtaarthan pranayasyaanatikramaat,

nityam sfutataram madhye` sthitavad yam prakaashaye`t. 34

The *srashtaa* (Creator) – who is the form of the Atma-svabhava – fulfills the desires in his heart during the waking state, by his own wish, and the strength of his own power.

How is this done?

He raises the *soma-soorya* (moon-sun), *apaana-praana* (winds that digest and support the life spirit) and *ne`tra* (the eyes) to carefully look at the objects he wants to see. The purport of this is that innumerable objects come before a human being – dancing girls, actors, wrestlers, spectacles, etc – but he sees only what he wants to see, because it is in them that he sees his own swarup.

In the same way, when the person is in a dream state, he is seated in his own svabhava, and sees the things his heart desires, because the Atma-Samvit does not cross the boundaries of desires. It is an ancient statement that whatever is created in this world is created because of desires; nothing rises on its own. Objects cannot transgress desires.

It is written in the Rahasya Stotra, ‘The buddhi recollects things that are forgotten, and places them before the infinite Atma. The Atma-Samvit does not, even in a dream, reject any entreaty made lovingly by the buddhi.’

These words are spoken by a siddha Mahapurusha – ‘Whoever sits in the *chidaakaasha* (the space of consciousness) and investigates matter, sees only non-fragmented reality.’ Even the science of astrology – the Jyotish Shastra – says that the dreams seen by people are according to the strong inclinations of their senses at the time of the person’s falling asleep.

Up till now, the thought of the deep sleep state hiding the Atma has been negated by giving a description about the independence of the dream state. Now, the author states that only a person who is healthily established in his

swarup obtains independence in all the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. Independence cannot be obtained unless a person is established in his swarup.

Anyathaa tu svatantraa syaat srishtistaddharmakatvatah,

satatam laukikasye`va jaagritsvapnapadadvaye`. 35

If a person is not established in his swarup, the restlessness of the mind will give free rein to the forms taken by his dreams, because of his desires. The meaning of *svaatantrya* (independence) is that the scenes in the dream state will be ambiguous and unconnected, because this is the *svabhaava* (nature) of *srishti* (Creation). The Tattva's svabhava is to spread desires. An agnani person's desires move independently in the waking and dreaming states. They are not caused by agnan; it is the nature of the Samvid; and the desires and impulses are in thousands! Their swarup is to give related and unrelated alternatives. A Gnani, however, remains liberated; agnanis become unrestrained by any kind of decorum.

After describing the splendor and absolute independence of the Atma, its attributes of Gnan and the power of doing anything are explained in the next shloka. The *sookshma* (subtle) and *vyavahita* (divided), etc is explained in the next shloka.

Yathaa hyarthosfuto drishtah saavadhaane`pi che`tasi,

bhooyah sfutataro bheeti svabalodyogabhaavitah. 36

Tathaa yat paramaarthe`na ye`na yatra yadaa sthitam,

tattathaa balamaakramya na chiraat sampravartate`. 37

Objects like a pot or cloth are not clear when seen from a distance, but they can be understood properly when a person focuses on them. Similarly, the forms, place and the time the objects are seen in becomes clear when a person makes an effort to see them with an expanded Samvit, because there is no *aavarana* (covering that hides) in the swarup.

It has been stated earlier that with the touch of the Atma-bala – the power of the Atma – a person becomes like the object before him, and thus

obtains the factual knowledge about it. (This is the cause for the Advaita Vedanta – which has a very similar principle – getting accurate Gnan when the antahkarana, not separate from the Atma, becomes one with the consciousness that is not separate from any object of the senses that he perceives. In this, there is no touch of the bala.)

It is written in the Tattva Yukti, 'A person who is the master of his senses obtains Gnan about the *chara-achara* (moving-unmoving) objects of the world through the Atma-Samvit that obtains knowledge.' This is why there is nothing to be surprised at in such a person having knowledge about minor details about the past and the future.

After describing the Gnan-shakti the author describes the capacity of the *kaarya-kartritta* (the action-the feeling of being the doer).

Durlabhopi tadaakramya yatah kaarye` pravartate`,

aachchhaadaye`d bubhukshaam cha tathaa yotibubhukshitah. 38

Even a person who has lost his valor and become weak and emaciated, can – by the power of his *utasaaha* (zeal) and hard work – accomplish his task. Even a physically weak person uses the power of determination to fight in battle, and displays great courage.

By practicing Yoga a weakling can become extremely strong. This *udyoga-bala* (the strength derived by effort) is the bala of the Atma-Samvit. A hungry man can quiet his hunger with the practice of Yoga. Patanjali's Yoga Darshan gives a method for destroying hunger and thirst by concentrating on the hollow of the throat. With *samyama-bala* (the power of concentration) a person can obtain the strength of an elephant!

This shows that once Atma-bala manifests, *shoka* (grief), *moha* (deluded thinking), *jaraa* (old age), *mrityu* (death) etc are destroyed.

In this manner, not only does such a person become *sarvagna* (all-knowing) about his own body, he also obtains the ability to know whatever he wants to know about, anywhere and everywhere.

Ane`naadhishtite` de`he` yathaa sarvagnataadaayah,

tathaa svaatmanyadhishthaanaat sarvatraivam bhavishyati. 39

When a person learns self-restraint and the nature of his own body, he also knows the tendencies of his body. He is instantly aware of even the touch of a fly or worm climbing on his body. In the same way, when one gains knowledge about his *svaroopa* (essence; true form) and nature, he gains the ability to know about everything, everywhere.

The Gnan Samodha says, 'He is everything, because he is *vyaapaka* (all-pervading). He is all-knowing by nature. This is how being sarvagna springs up.' Furthermore, 'Had You not been present in the heart of all, and always sarvagna, how could anyone remember the things of this world that are subject to destruction? How does a new-born baby know how to suckle its mother? Who teaches little insects to swim in water? All this is the *vilaasa* (splendor) of Your *sarvagnataa* (being all-knowing).'

Elsewhere it is written, 'When bees collect pollen from flowers to make honey, who teaches them which flowers to go to, and which to avoid? Even the tiniest of worms arrange for their own food. Wild elephants spray water over themselves when they bathe – what is the source of their knowledge? How is it that the simple deer love music so much that they forget to eat and drink when they listen to music? Without the splendor of this *ananta* (infinite) Samvit, why do mice fear cats even when they are safe in their mouse-holes? A tortoise that has not been taught *vive`ka* (discrimination) hides in water and withdraws its limbs to protect them under its hard shell – where does he get this buddhi from?

It is the Atma-Samvit that makes peacocks dance. Who teaches birds to dive deep in water to catch fish? From whom do swans learn to separate the water from the milk? How do even small children manage to express their feelings? From where does the resolve arise in people's minds about which tasks they are to do that day? Who has taught the illiterate animals how to use their horns, teeth and claws for attack?

Had the eternal Samvid not been present in every being, how would an elephant be aware of its great strength, or a lion of its fearsome personality? How do animals become aware of approaching storms, draughts, earthquakes etc? People develop affection for even dangerous

animals like lions – how can such friendship and love arise without the one Samvit that abides in all hearts?’

The logic for this has already been described. All these are manifestations of the Atma-Samvit. To be established in your own swarup means to be established in the swarup of all; to never slip from that state. This is the *yukti* (connection) by which the sarvagnata manifests everywhere, and always.

It has also been said, ‘It is only that one *bhaava* (existence) that is the *sva-bhaava* (own nature) of all. All the bhavas are the svabhava of one’s own bhava. A person who has experienced the Tattva of one bhava has experienced the Tattva of all bhavas.

*E’ko bhaavah sarvabhaavasvabhaavah sarve` bhaavaa
hye`kabhaavasvabhaavaah,*

*e’ko bhaavastattvato ye`na drishtah sarve` bhaavaastattvataste`na
drishtaah.*

There is a *rahasya-yukti* (hidden connection) regarding this, whichever body the Samvit is settled in, that is where the qualities of the Samvit will manifest.

*Rahasyayuktiratre`yam shareere` yatra yatra cha,
samvido daardhayalaabhah syaattatra tatra gunodayah.*

The author now tells us the method for uprooting the *durguna* (wrong tendencies) that cover up these *guna* (good tendencies).

*Glaanirvilunthikaa de`he` tasyaashchaagnaanatah sritih,
tadunme`shaviluptam che`t kutah saa syaadahe`tukaa. 40*

If there is anything in this body that can reduce, hide, or destroy the splendor of the Atma-Samvit it is *glaanee* (depression; languor). Glani manifests in the form of lack of enthusiasm. It comes from agnan. If destroyed by the Atma-svabhava, depression, remorse, or lack of zeal cannot remain in a person’s life. The Yogis destroy this agnan and glani, and destroy old age and death, and become strong.

Now, the swarup of *unme`sha* (rising of a mental resolve) is explained.

E`kachintaaprasaktasya yatah syaadaparodayah,

unme`shah sa tu vigne`yah svayam tamupalakshaye`t. 41

One more worry crops up while a person is immersed in one anxiety. What is the cause? This is called *unme`sha* (the first stirring of a mental resolve). You should experience this yourself. In the forgetting of the first worry, and rising of the next, it is unmesh that is in both, and in-between the two.

You should recognize your Atma through this unmesh. It is the all-pervading *sva-samve`dya* (personal experience) that is present in-between the two concerns that occupy the mind. It is a little like cohabitation with a young lady – something that can be known only through personal experience.

The next shloka explains how beliefs rise up when a person practices the unmesh.

Ato bindurato naado roopamasmaadato rasah,

pravartate`chire`naiva kshobhakatve`na de`hinah. 42

When a person practices unmesh for a little time, he experiences a bright spot on the forehead, between the eyebrows. After that he hears a natural *anaahata-naada* (a sound not created by any friction like one object hitting another; a Yogic experience when the spirit merges into the absolute). It is this that is referred to as the *shabda brahma* (the sound form of the Brahman). The person then attains the power to hear far off sounds, see in the dark, get a darshan of a Devta, see miniscule objects that can be seen only through a microscope, taste amrita, and also the six kinds of flavors, etc.

Why do these experiences come?

The fact is, they are *kshobhaka* (causes of agitation), meaning, they are obstacles in obtaining the experience of the Samvit. In the opinion of Patanjali they are *siddhi* (supernatural powers) in the time of *vyutthaana* (rising), and obstacles in Samadhi.

It is worth noting that a serial order of the descriptions of this *bindu* (bright spot), *naada*, etc also echoes the serial order of Creation. It has been stated earlier that *srishti* (Creation) is made by *unmesh*. Before the *bindu* – meaning, before the *icchhaa-drik-shakti* (the power of the desire created by seeing the object) – expands before *unmesh* rises; and the *naad* that contains the *shabda* (sound; words) rises after that. This is the *vaak* (speech) that is the form of *kriyaa-shakti* (the power to act); and the *roopa* (appearance) comes after that.

This is the *darshan* of the *padaartha* (substance; object) and *vichaara* (profound thought). Then, *rasa* – meaning, a sweet longing – and *upabhoga* (indulgence; enjoying something) are born in it. The Mahapurushas who have experienced and understood the quintessence of this *rasa* call it *udyoga* (effort), *avabhaasa* (false knowledge), *charvana* (chewing), and *viglaapana* (swallowing). The serial order of these four is given in this shloka. The *vishe`sha* (specific) does not give a comprehensive understanding of its pattern through a definition. It gets a *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the Atma-Samvit by itself.

How is this sakshatkara obtained?

The next shloka gives the method.

*Didrikshaye`va sarvaarthaan yadaa vyaapyaavatishtate`,
tadaa kim bahunokte`na svayame`vaavabotsyate`. 43.*

When a person is firmly established in an intense desire for *darshan* he permeates all matter, and abides in everything, and obtains the *bodha* (incandescent understanding) of his own nature. The purport of this teaching needs to be understood. Just as a person becomes alert when he wants to see some amazing spectacle, a person is first inclined towards the objects of the external world, and then he becomes established in his own *swarup*.

He realizes his own nature, including his *sarvagnata*. This has been stated earlier, in the main *Karika*. This state has been called the *rahasya-mudraa* in the *Tattvartha Chintamani*. In the *Bhoga-Moksha Pradeepika* it is described thus – activated by the *bala* of *unmesh*, a *Yogi* remains established in his

own swarup. Such a Yogi remains on the grounds of anand – the *ananda bhoomi* – and enjoys the bhogas that come his way. This state is extremely *ucchhrinkhala* (free of restraint or rules), and supremely *vikasvara* (active), but only for those whose buddhi is enlightened. The siddha purushas always remain in a state of anand. This is the *paraa mudraa* (highest position).

It is stated elsewhere that all shaktis – including darshan – should be thrown out of the chitta at one go, into their individual sense objects. You stand like a pillar of gold in their midst. Truly, you are the *vishva-aadhaara* (the support on which the world rests).

Furthermore, ‘The shaktis dart here and there, like the fickle glances of a prostitute. Just keep observing them. Truly, you support the world, but are separate from it.’ Remain *prabuddha* (enlightened), *nirvikalpa* (free of options), and constantly vigilant, without contracting your powers. Any *vishaya* (sense object) that appears before Gnan (your knowledge) should be seen and dismissed by the light of the Samvit, as being the *gne`ya* (that, which is known, as being separate from the one who knows). Establish the Samvit in that, which is free from fragmentation. Then, no other can cause suffering for the Samvit.

See what the Bhoga-Moksha Pradeepika says. ‘The *agni* (fire) of the *avibhaaga-bodha* (awareness of that, which is un-fragmented) should be used to dispel all *vibhaaga* (divisions). Then drink the nectar of that, which is known. Then that Yogi becomes fully satisfied and free of disease very quickly. He wanders round freely, by himself. It is the quintessence of *kramaartha* (the result of following the proper order of progress), and the *bhoomikaa* (preamble) of the supreme flow of the *ve`dya* (to be known). It is with the consent of these that they are described, for the Gnan of the deserving disciples, because the *paradhaaraa-bhoomikaa* (introduction to the highest stream) has no divisions.’

It is said, ‘The causes of vibhag are well-known. They are *de`sha* (space), *kaala* (time), *kriyaa* (action), and *aakaara* (form). That, in which they do not exist, has no cause for any division.’

Also, ‘The *mana* (emotional mind) and the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) in it are to be reduced to ashes. The *gnaanaagni* (fire of Gnan) does this by its

drishti (a look). Once they are burnt up, both *antarmukhataa* (being turned towards the inner world) and *bahirmukhataa* (being turned towards the outer world) become a Samadhi.'

Further, 'The fire of *vignaana* (acquired Gnan) brightens and, using its shakti drinks up the ocean of vishays. No other has the capacity to do this. Gnan is such an amazing volcano!'

You have read the logical description of '*yasmaatsarvamayo jeevah*' in the commentary of this sentence. What is meant is that the nature of the Tattva is the swarup of the Gnan that can be known. Therefore, all that can be known – all the gneya – should be made one with the Tattva. Once this is done, the shaktis of *vikalpa* (ambiguity; options) can no longer cause any suffering; they lose the power to make a Yogi slip from his swarup.

It is also stated, 'Space is one and all-pervading. Walls create an illusion of inside and outside.' In the same way, the Pashupati Tattva (the Tattva that is the Master of all beings; Shiva) sees the *graahya* (that, which is consumed) and *graahaka* (the consumer) in the same light. In your Samadhi-swarup there are no differences of *vikshe`pa-vyaakshe`pya* (agitated-agitator).

Thus, the enlightened Master is not troubled by any other. The purport of this becomes evident, that the unenlightened *pashu* (animals; creatures) get battered repeatedly in this world. Their *lakshana* (characteristics) are:

Shabdaraashisamuthasya shaktivargasya bhogyataam,

kalaaviluptavibhavo gatah san sa pashuh smritih. 45

The *varna-samooaha* (group of words) is the *shabda-raashi* (sum total of letters). From the first letter, to the last letter of the alphabet, the *maatrikaa* (mother) is the creator of words, because all shaktis are filled with sound. Used in the wrong way, a person loses his splendor; meaning, he forgets his quality of being all-pervading. He slips from his swarup. The result of this is that he becomes the plaything of the shaktis of which he is actually the Master. Instead of being the *purusha* (human) he becomes the *pashu* (an animal controlled by a human).

The Ishwara Pratyabhigna says, ‘All *bhaava* (feelings) in our lap are like the movements of our body. Their Master is called “the one who establishes their existence, the Samvit, or Shiva”. However, when he becomes ensnared in the same bhava (the feeling of not being free), he gets *kle`sha* (distress), and becomes a pashu in chains.’

In the words of a Mahatma, ‘the fact is that the *bhe`da-granthi* (the imaginary knot of nescience that shows things to be separate) is, itself, tattered. The person who does not know this is a pashu, and the one who knows it, is the pashhu-pati – Shiva, the Master of pashus.’

Therefore –

Paraamritarasaapaayastasya yah pratyayodbhava,

te`naasvatantrataame`ti sa cha tanmaatragocharah. 46

When this pashu experiences the vishays through the eyes, ears, and other sense organs, memories and other information arise in the antahkarana. This is the *chyuti* (falling from the rightful position), because belief in the importance of sense objects make a person dependent, and seemingly separate. Actually, the vishays and memories belong to him alone; meaning, the desire for them manifests in their forms.

This is why –

Svaroopavarane`chaasya shaktayah satatodyata,

yatah shabdaanuvedhe`na na vinaa pratyayodbhava. 47

The shabda-raashi is always eager to cover up the swarup and svabhava of a person. It wants to hide the swarup of the purush through its *kriyaa-shakti* (power of action), because no belief based on knowledge and awareness can be achieved without a proper understanding of the shabda and varna. Actually, these words show this one Tattva as being two by dividing them into the *vaachya-vaachaka* (spoken-speaker). The Vakyapadeeya is quite right in saying, ‘There is no *pratyaya* (belief) that does not have the *anugama* (something that follows) of the shabda. All Gnan is seen to be *anuviddha* (intertwined) by the shabda.’

It has been stated before, that *vaak* (speech) is the cause of all interaction. Elsewhere it is stated, 'O Deva! In the chitta's turning towards You it is always *baadha* (negation) that is the *pratyavamarshini shakti* (the power that examines a belief), without which even *prakaasha* (light) cannot be seen.' It is this kriya-shakti that is the cause of *bandhana* (bondage) and Moksha.

Se`yam kriyaatmikaa shaktih shivasya pashuvartinee,

bandhayitree svamaargasthaa gnaataa siddhyupapaadikaa. 48

It is the power that activates and sends the pashu into bondage, and prods it into action according to its whim; it is never a cause for a Tattvagna (one who has Gnan about the Tattva) purush – who is the form of Shiva – becoming bound. When a person thinks, 'it is mine', it becomes the cause of siddhis like bhoga and Moksha. Not knowing its essence and its independent nature is the cause of a person's being bound. Gnan about its essence and independent swarup is the cause of a person being controlled only the Atma. It has already been stated that the cause of *utthaana* (being uplifted) and *patana* (downfall) is one.

The next shloka explains how this Shakti becomes the cause of bondage.

Tanmaatrodayaroope`na manohambuddhivartinaa,

puryashtake`na samruddhastadutthapratyayodbhavam. 49

Bhunkte`paravasho bhoga tadbhaavaat sansare`datah,

samsmriti-pralayasyaasya kaaranam samprachakshmahe`. 50

The fact is there are two forms of the *puryashtaka* (Atma in the individual). One is a subtle form of desire and the other is the gross human form that experiences pleasure and pain. A person who believes himself to be bound by the subtle body is dependent. He experiences the beliefs of being sukhi, dukhi, etc. Actually it manifests only through the experience of words etc; its form is restricted to the *mana* (emotional mind), *ahankaara* (the subtle pride of individuality), *buddhi* (the intellect) – the antahkarana. The person believes this to be his swarup, and becomes the *shareera* (body), and obtains the *samsaara* (interactive world).

What I want to say is that this is the cause of the stream of *janma-marana* (birth-death) and *samsara-pralaya* (Creation-Dissolution). There is no other reason for our conviction that the world is real, and we are separate individuals.

Now, the uprooting of the bondage is described.

Yadaa tve`katvasamroodastadaa tasya layodbhavau,

niyachchhan bhoktritaame`ti tatashchakre`shvaro bhave`t. 51

When a person thinks about bandhan and Moksha in this manner, *bodha* (incandescent understanding) rises, and the obstacles (caused by agnan) are removed.

Sit astride one of the thrones of the two puryashtakas – either the subtle or the gross. Let your *chitta* (mental inclination; thoughts) dissolve. Then, the beliefs created by words etc that rise and fade away, will be restrained. After that, you will no longer be their *bhogyā* (an object to be enjoyed); you will obtain the feeling of being the *bhoktaa* (the one who enjoys the objects of the senses). You will be free of the *pashutva* (characteristics of a domesticated animal), helpless in enduring whatever happens. You will obtain the *bhaava* (feeling) of being the Prabhu (Ruler).

It is said, ‘Become the *pati* (master) of the *pashu* (animal), and master the *pashu* (in you). As soon as you become Pashupati (Shiva) you will instantly be free of *pashutva*.’

There is a sentence in the Svabodhodaya Manjari. ‘When any attractive object comes before you, concentrate on the feeling (that it is your Atma), until the mana gets immersed in that feeling. *Nirodha* (blocking thoughts) will become your servant.’

When *svaatantrya* (freedom) is obtained in this manner a person becomes the master of the Shakti-Chakra; meaning, the powers of being all-knowing, the ruler of all, not controlled by any other, are seen clearly.

The author, filled with anand, now praises his Guru, and gives his own disciples the teaching of the behavior proper to a refined person.

Agaadha samshayaambhodhi samuttaranataarineem,

vande` vichitraarthapadaam chitraam taam gurubhaarateem. 52

The *vaani* (speech) of my Guru is wonderful! His *vaachya* (what he says), and *vaachaka* (speaker); the *artha* (meaning) and *pada* (words) are extraordinary. His teaching is a ship that can carry us across the deep sea (of this illusionary world). I praise it!

Nobody is superior to the Guru. The Jayakhya Samhita says, 'The self-effulgent Bhagwan, the Master of the world, assumes a body formed of mantras, out of compassion. His arms are the forms of the Shastras, and they lift up the people who are drowning in the ocean of this sansara.'

The Narad Samhita says, 'The Guru uproots the sansara. Even if we offer up everything to our Guru as *dakshinaa* (a monetary gift offered to a Brahmin) it is never enough!'

The Svayam Pradeepika says, 'A person who aspires to attain Bhagwan should first investigate his Guru. Bhagwan can be known through the Shastras and the Guru is the one who can make us experience this Gnan. Gnan about the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) disappears when a person obtains Shashtra-Gnan. To tell the truth, it needs but to be known; Bhagwan is already with us. Therefore, the Guru is superior to the Shastras as well as to the Ishwara!'

Even in the Pancha Ratna it is stated, 'Your behavior towards your Guru should be the same as towards the Ishwara.'

Now, the author shows respect to his *sampradaaya* (traditional knowledge handed from Guru to disciple in an unbroken succession).

Vasuguptaadavaapye`dam gurostattvaarthadarshinah,

rahasyam shlokayaamaasa samyak shreebhattakallatah. 53

Shri Bhatt Kallat obtained the hidden Gnan from his Tattva-darshi (one who has seen the Tattva) Guru, Vasugupta. He comprehended it, and put it systematically in shlokas.

This is the seed of *brahmavidyaa* (knowledge about the Brahman). It should not be sown in unsuitable soil, without first testing the ground. Elsewhere, Bhatt Kallat has said that this *vidyaa* (knowledge) is like a virtuous maiden. If given to an unsuitable husband, she does not give physical pleasure; she becomes the cause of her father being blamed. Therefore, this vidya should only be taught to a person who has all the suitable qualities.

This vidya has been brought to light to dispel the darkness of *avidyaa* (nescience). The Spanda Pradeepika is the *ullaasa* (rapture) of pure bodha. One should give up envy, and give deep thought to this vidya. It is something wonderful. It should never be disdained.

Utpal Acharya was the son of a Brahmin called Trivikram. He wrote this Pradeepika for his worthy disciples. Just as a man does not go astray if he carries a lamp, this Pradeepika shows the right path to people who are in danger of losing their way. By adopting the Gnan given in this Pradeepika a person obtains his *bhagavattaa* (essence of being Bhagwan) in this very life. What greater wonder can there be than this?

Chapter 3.

Deductions of the 'Bhagavnama Kaumudi'.

[Shri Bhagvanama Kaumudi is a profound and scholarly treatise written by Shri Laxmidharji. It was written before the fifteenth century. The author was blessed by Shridhar Swami; their opinions are basically very similar. There is a Sanskrit commentary on this book, titled Prakash, written by Anantadev, a highly respected scholar of the Mimansa school of thought. His father Apadev was a renowned scholar of the Mimansa philosophy. Shri Roop Goswami and Shri Jeev Goswami have both referred to the Kaumudi in their writings.

The grave thinking in this book is not easy for the general public to comprehend. Therefore, a simplified summery is presented here, in the words of Maharajji, Swami Akhandananda Saraswati.]

(1)

The Bhagwannama Kaumudi was written to help the *mana* (emotional mind) of people to remain engrossed in Bhagwan's *naama-sankirtana* (chanting His name – singing His glories).

It is a sin to even imagine that chanting Bhagwan's name is a materialistic activity! It is said that Narak (Hell) is the result of such thinking! In spite of knowing this, the translation of this opinion is discussed here with the intention of refuting the idea that chanting Bhagwan's name is a worldly activity.

It is a *paapa* (sin) to even talk about paapa! However, the process of refuting this opinion gives a blessed opportunity to reflect upon the *naama-mahaatmya* (greatness of Bhagwan's name). It is with this viewpoint that we now discuss the point. Regarding this, there are two *poorva paksha* (preliminary side) to this opinion.

The first Poorva Paksha is: The Itihasa-Puranas (histories-mythological narratives) are not *pramaana* (proof) in their basic meanings. The purport is that the principal meaning of these books should not be considered while reading the descriptions of the greatness of the naam they contain. The Vedas give commands about what a person should do – the *vihiita* (duty), and what not to do – the *nishiddha* (forbidden). The Vedas are not concerned with anything that is self-evident. Only the commands of the *vidhi* (what should be done) are considered to be *pramaana* (proof); not the *mantra* (group of words that have subtle power), nor the *arthavaada* (the opinion that mantras should be used for fulfilling worldly desires), nor the Upanishads (the portion of the Vedas that sum up the Gnan portion of the Vedas).

The mantras, arthavad, and Upanishads are applied for the methods of the ordained duties, like *japa-paatha* (ritual chanting – reciting passages). When this is the state of the Vedas, one cannot accept the Itihisas and Puranas as proofs. Jemini – who is considered to be the Acharya (Teacher) of Mimansa – has stated clearly that the things which are not *yagnarthaa* (meant for doing a Yagna) are futile.

Poorva Paksha (2): Some people are of the opinion that only those sentences of the Vedas are proof, which indicate the *vidhi* (correct method; proper action) and *nishe`dha* (forbidden actions), but this is not acceptable to the author of Bhagawanama Kaumidi. The same applies to Dharma.

However, it is correct to accept that the Vedas are the proof when they describe the *siddha-vastu* (the object that is established; the Atma that is the non-dual Brahman and the substratum of all that exists), because the Acharyas (Masters; Teachers) have described Shakti (the primordial power in female form) as the purport of the Siddha-Vastu. In worldly terms, this is like saying, ‘just as you have got a son’. Hearing this sentence, one understands the purport to be a fruit that gives happiness. It is the same with what the Vedas say.

Mantras and arthavad reveal the unknown, and give an understanding about the utility of the Vidhi.

If any *shabda* (word; sound) is naturally unrestrained, definite, and gives Gnan about the unknown object, establishing that it is true, what is the need to doubt it, or hesitate to accept it as established and authentic?

We accept that mantra and arthavad are a part of the Vidhi, but how can the Upanishad be a part of the Vidhi? The Upanishads describe the Atma as the *a-kartaa* (not the doer), *a-bhoktaa* (not the one who experiences joy and suffering), *a-sansaaree* (not of this interactive world), *a-parichhinna* (not separable) *svaroopa* (essence), which can never be an *anga* (part) of Karma (a ritual).

When a person obtains Gnan about the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of the Atma he becomes free of all *anartha* (misfortune), and obtains *paramaananda* (supreme bliss). Therefore, even if it is different from other pramans, it is the factual proof; and everything else is a *pramaana-aabhaasa* (an illusion of proof). Kumaril Bhatt has also said that he welcomes *srishti* (Creation) and *pralaya* (Dissolution) as proved by the Itihasa-Puranas.

As far as arthavad is concerned, it is believed to be of three kinds.

1. *Anuvaada* – meaning, interpretation.
2. *Gunavaada* – meaning, the gunas, the qualities.
3. *Bhootavaada* – meaning, that which benefits beings.

For example, ‘Fire is a medicine for cold weather’. This can be proved by other methods, but the Vedas give an anuvad of it: ‘A Brahmachari (avowed celibate) is a lion’. This indicates a bright personality and quality of valor, and therefore, it is gunavad. The first example (of fire) is established by *pratyaksha pramaana* (proved by a common experience), so it is interpreted by the Vedas. The second example is contrary to a general common experience and therefore, it is only an indication of lofty qualities.

However, that, which is not proved by *pratyaksha* (direct perception) praman, or is contrary to it, that is where the *bhootaatha-vaadarthavaada* (the opinion that this is of benefit to beings) is accepted.

As an example, take this sentence: Indra raised his *vajra* (thunderbolt) to kill Vritrasura. No other praman can confirm this; which means, it is neither a *samvaada* (conversation) nor a *vivaada* (argument).

All these arthavad are given in the Itihasas and Puranas, as well as in the Vedas. They establish their own purport.

It is true that the descriptions of the *de`vtaa-tattva* (the essence of Devtas, meaning divine powers), and meaning of *kartavya* (duties), the Smritis (divine words heard directly by enlightened Mahatmas, like the Manu Smriti) have their own unassailable position. It is impossible to deny their importance.

Even so, when it comes to the *praayashcitta* (atonement; penance) of great sins, it is not proper that the Puranas negate the difficult prayashchittas prescribed in the Smritis, and give a ruling that naam-kirtan is sufficient atonement. The purport of the Puranas is to emphasize the importance of praising the Devta (Bhagwan) who is the only object worthy of praise and worship.

That means, when we get a particular fruit by taking the name of the Devta just once, what can't we get if we do His *bhajana-poojaa* (singing His glories; worshipping Him) all life long? The gist of the matter is the statements about the greatness of the naam, given in the Puranas, are not the primary purpose of the Puranas; the primary purpose is to induce people to become engrossed in Bhagwan, and not in worldly considerations.

Now, see the reply:

Uttara paksha (the reply): The Puranas are authentic proof of their principle meaning. For example, the Vedas are equal praman for the ruling of *kartavya* (ordained duties) and the *parama-artha* (supreme goal), and so are the Puranas.

The descriptions of the *varna-aashrama dharma* (the right behavior for the different classes of society and stages of life) given in the Vedas are the same as in the Puranas.

The first chapter of the first canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat Maha Purana says, '*dharmah projjhitakaitavah*', in which Dharma, Gnan, and Bhakti are – all three – clearly shown to be expounded.

The Mahabharata – an Itihasa – also states that Dharma, Artha (worldly success), Kama (fulfillment of desires) and Moksha (release from worldly bonds) are the four Purusharthas (principle human achievements), and that whatever is in this book is also everywhere in world. Furthermore, what is not in this book is nowhere else either.

The Vedas and the Puranas expound upon Dharma and the Brahman. Many Puranas focus on elaborate descriptions of Dharma. Just as the Vedas elaborate on different subjects, the Puranas do the same without contradicting the Vedas.

The predominant subject of the Puranas is the oneness of the non-dual Brahman as expounded in the Upanishads. '*Ve`daa brahmaatma vishayaah*' (the subject of the Vedas is the Atma that is the Brahman). They do not give the ruling of Karma (religious rituals); the purpose is *karma-moksha* (to be free of the fruits of Karmas, by giving up the subtle pride of being the one who is doing the Karma): *karmamokshaaya karmaani*. Just as all three sections of the Vedas contain the same truth, so do the Puranas.

Thus, the contribution of the Puranas regarding *dharmasaashana* (the rulings of Dharma) and *dharmasanshana* (the purifying methods of Dharma) is equal.

The Puranas are not Arthavad.

People may say, 'It is true that Dharma is the purport of the Puranas, but when they state that naam-kirtan has the capacity to atone for great sins, it contradicts the ruling given by the Vedas for different rituals of prayashchitta that should be done as atonement. This is why it is not logical to accept the Puranas as *pramaana* (proof).

The answer to this is, 'Only those people, who have not studied the Mimansa philosophy thoroughly, will get scared when they hear your opinion. My question to you is: why do you consider the statements that propound the greatness of the naam to be Arthavad? Don't the Vedas have statements that propound the greatness of naam-kirtan? Or are they a concluding part of some

instituted ritual? Or, are naam-kirtan not the principal object of the substance expounded by the Vedas? Is the importance given to naam-sankirtan in the Vedas unintentional?

There can be only two reasons for saying that chanting Bhagwan's naam, or singing His glories, is *a-vihita* (not an ordained duty).

1. Either there should be no belief if any *linga* (gender), *lot* (foolishness), or *tavya* (suffix) is in it.
2. They should not result in any action like kirtan, etc.

Neither of these reasons is proper to justify the statement that naam-kirtan is Arthavad because by the method of the Poorva Mimansa, when there is no belief in the command, the command to do Yagnas, using *dravya-de`vataa-sambandha* (the connection between offering substances and the Devtas who are propitiated), that are not separated by the past, present, and future, is only imagined. For example, *aagne`ya ashtaakapaala* (eight divine doorkeepers who protect a Yagna). In the same way, the Puranas say:

Praayashchittam tu tasyaikam harisamsmaranam param.

The naam-kirtan becomes a successful Vidhi (method prescribed by the Vedas) by the *saadhya-saadhana-sambandha* (the connection between the goal and the effort) that is not separated by the past, present and future.

Hari-smarana (remembering Bhagwan) is the only, and the most superior, prayashchitta for paapa.

The purport is that naam-sankirtan is the highest method of atonement, for removing the ill-effects of wrong-doing, meaning, a person should chant Bhagwan's name and sing His glories to destroy the sins he has incurred.

Another sentence of the Puranas is:

Harirityavashe`naaha pumaannaarhati yaatanaam.

That means Bhagwan's naam releases a person from the suffering that is the fruit of paapa, even if it is spoken helplessly or inadvertently. Therefore,

one should keep saying 'Hari! Hari!' Certain verbs, like *yajate*, *juhoti*, etc that are used in the Vedas are grammatically shown to establish the Vidhi.

Suppose the statements that affirm the greatness of Bhagwan's naam are considered to be Arthavad by basing the argument on some part of some other Vidhi, then it must be asked: which is the Vidhi from which you have come to this conclusion? There is no *saannidhaana* (proximity) of another Vidhi, and the *upasamhaara* (conclusion; summing up) is also in the naam-sankirtan being an independent power.

The conclusion given in the Poorva Mimansa is, 'A person who wants to obtain *pratishtaa* (prestige) should do an anushtana (specific worship) of the ritual called the Raatri Satra. Similarly, the conclusion here is, 'A person who wants his sins to be reduced is eligible for doing naam-sankirtan. This is the Vidhi.'

Naam-sankirtan is the anushtana, and *paapa-kshaya* (destruction of paapa) is the fruit. Therefore, the Vidhi about the naam is independent; it is not a part of Karma-Vidhi.

There is another point that should be noted. In the Karma-Vidhi the words used for during the *havish-tyaga* (putting the oblations into the sacred fire as an offering to propitiate the Devta who is being worshipped) is the Devta. Where the word is 'Vishnu', Vishnu is there. Where the word is 'Shipivishta', He is there. It is the same with 'Agni', 'Shuchi', 'Paavaka', etc.

In sankirtan, however, that is not the case. Any name of Bhagwan can be taken in any place. Only Bhagwan's name has the power to destroy all paapas. The naam-sankirtan does not come into Karma-Vidhi, even through any connection with any substance. Therefore, the *fala-shruti* (the declared fruit of the worship) of naam-sankirtan is a fact; it is not Arthavad.

It is not proper to say that every sentence that mentions a fala-shruti is Arthavad, because when the principal meaning is given clearly, there is no cause to imagine a secondary meaning. Is sankirtan not a *kriyaa* (action)? Then, where is the scope for doubting that it will have a result? Sankirtan itself is a *fala-saadhana* (method that gives a fruit), and the Shastras tell us to do sankirtan to obtain its fruit.

It has already been stated that the method of sankirtan is *svaarthā-parakā* (self-explanatory). If someone says that nobody is a *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant), he will be asked if the Vidhi of *adhyayana* (studying), of *svaadhyāya* (understanding the Self; the Atma) is not a *saadhana* (method) of the sankirtan Vidhi. There, the study is, itself, the fruit of the sadhan. The study of each and every letter has been considered to have a purpose. That being the case, why is the uttering of letters considered to be the same as uttering the naam, both having a purpose? Therefore, the greatness of naam-sankirtan has no other purport. It is exactly as it is said to be; meaning, it is not Arthavad.

Thus, all three points about naam-sankirtan being Arthavad have been refuted. That it is not Vidhi, that it is a residue of some other Vidhi, and that its purport is not self-beneficial.

The statements about naam-sankirtan are Vidhi. What is Vidhi? Vidhi is a *pre`raka pramaana* – a teaching that tells you, ‘Do this, don’t do this’. That, which is not known by any other praman, is suitable for an *anushtana* (a religious ritual done for a specific goal), and is a *saadhana* (method) for obtaining a desired object, is called ‘Vidhi’.

That being the case there is no need for restrictions like *linga* (gender), *lot* (foolishness), *maatras* (length of a syllable) etc. It can be known by any kind of sentence.

Very well; why is it necessary to formulate a sentence? Naam-kirtan should be done at any time, without any restriction of the time being auspicious, etc. It should be done with the desire to destroy paapa. It is worth doing. It obliterates sin. People keep saying ‘Arthavad, Arthavad’ but they also accept it as a *she`sha* (conclusion) of Vidhi! Had there been no Vidhi, where would the shesha come from? It would then be the Arthavad of the one whose Vidhi it is, isn’t it? Doesn’t the established Vidhi give fruit on the strength of Arthavad? This is a *pratyaksha* (clearly written) statement of Vidhi, given in the Bhagwat – ‘*keertitavyah* (do kirtan)’. ‘*Naamani gaayan vichare`t* (sing His name as you go round doing your routine activities)’. What is this, if not the Vidhi?

‘Sankeertaye`t jagannaatham (sing the glories of Jagannatha – the Master of the world)’. *‘Govinde`ti sadaa vaachyam* (chant the name of Govind)’. *‘Vishnornaamaani pathe`t’*, *‘vishnor naamni eeraye`t* (speak the name of Vishnu)’. There are countless such statements in the Shastras. Therefore, it is useless to say that *naama-smarana* (remembering Bhagwan’s name) is not Vidhi.

It is well-known that there are many kinds of Vidhis, like *nitya vidhi* (daily duties), *niyama vidhi* (duties undertaken voluntarily), etc. Sandhya Vandan is a daily duty. Just as you do Sandhya Vandan every evening, you should do kirtan every evening. Regarding this, someone may have a doubt that the fala-shruti (the fruit given by the act, according to the Shastras) are Arthavad, and therefore, the purpose is to inspire people to do Karma-anushtanas; they do not bestow fruits independently. The answer to this is that Vidhi may be nitya, but it is not *poorna* (complete) unless it gives a fruit. Therefore, an Arthavad fruit must be accepted.

Statements that expound the naam-sankirtan are absolutely true. It is equally true that all paapa is destroyed by naam-sankirtan. Therefore, the description given in the Puranas about the greatness of Bhagwan’s name are in keeping with the Vidhi of the Vedas.

Krishna krishna mandhusudana vishno

kaitabhaantaka mukunda muraare`,

padmanaabha narasimha hare` shree-

raama raama raghunandana paahi.

(2)

The question is: is naam-sankirtan an independent sadhan of paapa-kshaya or is it a part of some superior sadhan? The answer is obvious by the refutation that the greatness of naam-sankirtan is a materialistic activity. Even so, it is just as well to reject the other accusations in order to firmly establish our principle.

How should the logic be established?

The point is how does one understand the logical purport when the Smritis (remembered statements) by Manu and others contradict statements given in the Puranas? For example, contradictions are seen in the methods of *paapa-praayashchitta* (methods used to atone for paapas) given in the Puranas and the Smritis. Are we to assume that there is an option? Meaning, are we free to choose between the naam-sankirtan of the principle of the Puranas, and the severe rituals of prayashchitta recommended by Manu and others? There is a vast difference between just uttering Bhagwan's name and doing a twelve-year *vrata* (self-imposed austerity)!

Another possible *vyavasthaa* (arrangement) is that both should be done simultaneously – the twelve-year *vrata* along with the naam-sankirtan – because it is not possible to favor one over the other.

A third ruling can be that for the *adhikaari-vishe'sha* (the eligibility of the individual), naam-sankirtan is the *saadhana* (method) for paapa-kshaya for someone, and the method of Manu for someone else. This is called *vyavasthaa* – a proper arrangement. The deciding factor is what the individual is eligible for.

There is not the slightest doubt that listening to the greatness of Bhagwan's naam is something that should be done every day. Like the Smritis, the basis for this comes from the Vedas. It cannot be said that it is a natural interpretation of the Shastras, to make this optional or suitable for a certain type of person who is eligible; and therefore, it is certainly most inappropriate to limit naam-sankirtan as a *vikalpa* (option) or *vyavastha* of any kind.

There remains the point of *samucchaya* (multitude) – meaning prayashchitta and sankirtan combine to destroy paapa; they don't destroy paapa separately. Regarding this, the conclusion is that naam-sankirtan is an independent method for destroying sin. If it is considered at par with the prayashchitta of Manu and other authorities on instituted Dharma, the earlier misinterpretation of the statements in the books of Shastra will remain unchanged.

Is sankirtan a part of prayashchitta?

It cannot be denied that the Shastras contain statements that give the impression that naam-sankirtan is a part of the rituals of prayashchitta. For

example, the Bhagwat says, 'No prayashchitta has the power to purify a person who is turned away from Narayana.' 'Naam-sankirtan is able to cover up any flaws or lapses that may occur in the rituals like Yagna-Yaag.' 'Bhakti for Bhagwan gives success to *japa* (ritual chanting), *homa* (offering oblations into the sacred fire),' etc.

These statements show that naam-sankirtan and *naama-smarana* (remembering Bhagwan's name) etc are a part of all Karmas (Vedic rituals). Prayashchitta too, comes within Karmas, and therefore, naam-sankirtan gives its effect as a part of the prayashchitta rituals; not as an independent method. This conclusion is not in keeping with the Shastras. Nor is it a logical deduction. It is, therefore, necessary to give this some thought.

Doesn't Bhakti come into the category of Karma?

The *paramaarth*a (highest Truth) is that Bhakti for Bhagwan is in the same category as *brahmavidyaa* (Gnan about the Brahman). Bhagwat-bhakti does not come into the category of Karmas. The principle of the Shrimad Bhagwat Maha Purana is that an absolute end to karmas (actions) cannot be achieved by Karmas; a residue of *vaasanaa* (avid desires) remains. As a result, the person does sinful acts. This is why the prayashchitta of Karmas is recommended for an *agnaanee adhikaaree* (one who lacks Gnan is eligible for Karmas of the prayashchitta given in the Smritis).

The actual prayashchitta is a *vimarsha* (subject of deliberation). Like vimarsh, Bhakti also destroys all paapa. Bhakti may be in the form of *shravana* (listening to, and absorbing, the purport of spiritual discourses), *kirtana* (singing Bhagwan's name and glories), or *smarana* (remembering Him) – the power of all these is infinite. Each one of them has the capacity to uproot and destroy all paapa.

A paapi like Ajamil was freed of all his sins when he uttered the name, 'Narayana', when he called out to his son who was called Narayana. The prayashchitta of his paapas was done, of course; even his buddhi (intellect) became focused on Bhagwan.

Come; let us imbue the sweetness of one shloka of the episode of Ajamil from the Bhagwat.

*E`taavataalamadhanirharanaaya punsaam sankeertanam bhagavato
gunakarmanamnam,*

*vikrushya putramadhavaan yadajaamilopi naaraayane`ti mriyamaana iyaaya
muktim.*

Taking Bhagwan's naam is accepted here, as the cause of the destruction of all Ajamil's paapa. A grammatical analysis shows that the purport of this shloka is, 'Just taking Bhagwan's naam is enough! There is no need to say anything more.'

The sankirtan of Bhagwan's *guna* (attributes), *karma* (deeds), and names, is not needed for destroying all the paapa of a person. There is no need of a continuous anushtana of any of these. The *paapa-kshaya* (destruction of paapa) that is the fruit of sankirtan is very paltry, whereas Bhagwan's kirtan is something very great! No one uses an elephant to pull the plough to till a field!

Now, see how this incident took place. Ajamil's life had been filled with all kinds of wrongdoing. As he lay on his deathbed, he called out feebly to his son Narayana, and became liberated! He did not do Bhagwan's kirtan. He was not alert. In spite of this he obtained Mukti from all inclination for wrongdoing.

Paapa is a paltry part of *anartha* (misfortune; wrongdoing). It cannot be said that Ajamil got Mukti. Dharma Raj (also called Yama Raj, the presiding deity of Death) said, 'O Yamadoota (messengers of Yama Raj)! Just see! Ajamil is becoming *mukta* (liberated)!'

In Dharma Raj's view, Ajamil's Mukti is in the present tense. Kaivalya Mukti (a state where the person is not aware of anything except his Self) is *avide`ya* (cannot be revealed; it can only be experienced), but Muktis like *saalokya* (where the person lives eternally in Bhagwan's realm) are *ve`dya* (can be explained). Thus, Dharma Raj – or Yama Raj – is not describing any historical episode; he is showing us what Mukti is.

Chanting the name of Bhagwan is like a forest-fire that burns up all the trees in the forest of paapas of this world. The paapa of a person's entire lifetime are like a wisp of grass. Under the circumstances, we delude ourselves if we imagine that naam-sankirtan needs the support of any other sadhan to destroy paapa.

It is written in the Bhagwat, 'A person who is a paapi is not purified by *tapa* (severe austerities done as penance) as thoroughly as he is by focusing on Shri Krishna with his *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of action), by looking at Shri Krishna's image, listening to discourses about Him, smelling the flowers, incense and sandalwood paste offered to Him, tasting the water with which His feet have been washed, etc.' Doing kirtan is focusing the indriyas on Bhagwan.

An even clearer description is, 'The prayashchitta recommended in the Vedas and Smritis are not as effective in purifying a paapi as uttering Bhagwan's naam.'

The purport of this is, the *shuddhi* (purification) attained by Karmas is different, and the shuddhi attained by Bhakti is different. Had there been an *angaangee* (one as a part of the other) connection between the two, this would not have been possible, because the fruit of the *anga* (part) and the fruit of the *pradhaana* (principal) is always the same. In the Vishnu Purana it is declared that remembering Shri Krishna is superior to *tapasyaa* (tapa), or Karmas done as a penance.

Had Karma been the *angee* (principal) and kirtan been the *anga* this declaration of the Vishnu Purana would not have been justified, because the part cannot be superior to the principal.

Elsewhere it is written that the most superior prayashchitta for a paapi who feels remorse is to remember Bhagwan just once. How can a *saadhana* (method) that does not tolerate even remembering Bhagwan's name a second time endure any other kind of prayashchitta?

The Nrisimha Purana has a description of people suffering in Narak (Hell). They obtained Swarga (Heaven) by just uttering 'Krishna! Krishna!' and 'Shri Nrisimha!' In the Shiva Purana, people living in Narak uttered 'Hara! Hara!' and 'Om Namah Sivayah' and were immediately sent to Shiva Loka (the realm of Shankar Bhagwan).

The Vishnu-dharma (Dharma of people who worship the Ishwara as Vishnu) advises a person who wishes to devote himself totally to Vishnu Bhagwan, to give up all other sadhans except uttering Bhagwan's naam. It also declares that

uttering the name of Govind creates the qualities of Govind in a bhakta. It states that all paapa is removed by doing the kirtan of Govind.

The conclusion is that Hari-kirtan is the method for destroying all sin. No other method – like any Karma – is required; nor is kirtan a part of any other sadhan.

What is the uniqueness of naam-kirtan?

The *pushkala* (plenty; more than sufficient) of the *kaarana* (cause) is the *ke`valataa* (uniqueness; self-sufficiency). It is also called *nirape`kshataa* (not needing anything else). It exists in the moment just before the *kaarya* (effect; the objects of the world). It is called the *saamagree* (ingredient) of the rising of any action. The pushkal karana (the cause that is self-sufficient) is that, after which the action is completed successfully. If it needs another sadhan, it cannot be pushkal!

The sufficiency of the cause is seen in one thing only. For example, the effect of two things merging is subject to destruction. It is only in the two sections. Sometimes it is seen in two things, like the *apoorva* (latent fruit) of the *kaarya* – the ritual – for obtaining Swarga, in both the new moon and the full moon. At times it is present in many, like the several impliments used in making an earthen pot.

Where many forms of causes are made, they can be created only by combining with their *aashraya* (refuge). However, when there is only one pushkal-karana it is *sampoorna* (complete within itself). In the Bhakti of naam-sankirtan, it is the pushkal-karana that is present, and therefore, it has no need to combine with anything else.

It may be asked, that there are many causes in *aarambhavaada* (the theory that the earth was created at some point in time), like *samavaayee* (things coming together), *asmavaayee* (without the combining of different factors), *nimitta kaarana* (instrumental factors) etc. Even in the *parinaama* (result; conclusion) and *vivarta* (variable), there are two causes – the *upaadaana* (matter of which the object is made) and *nimitta* (instrumental factor in the creation of the object). Then, why should only Bhakti have pushkal-karana?

The answer to this is, we have declared that Bhakti is the one and only nimitta-karana for destroying paapa; not the upadana-karana. The upadana-karana is

the self-evident Atma, which has no need of the Shastras. Sabar Swami has stated unequivocally, 'everybody knows that he has to do *saadhanaa* (make an effort) to obtain any object. It is just that he does not know the *upaaya* (right method). That is why he is given teaching about the upaya.'

What if there is a doubt, that how can just the *nimitta-kaarana* (the cause that is also the instrumental factor) be a *nirape`ksha pushkala* (self-sufficient factor)? Or, how can any *kaarya* (effect; object) be accomplished by just the *nimitta-kaarana*? Neither of these doubts is logical. The cause, combined with effulgence, is enough to dispel darkness.

Therefore, the meaning of the words, '*ke`valayaa bhaktyaa*' given in the Bhagwat, mean that uttering the name of Bhagwan Madhusudana (Krishna, who killed the demon called Madhu) just once, is the pushkal karana for destroying paapa totally. It is neither a part of any other method, nor does it need to be combined with any other method.

My meaning is certainly not that the methods of prayashchitta given in the Manu Smriti etc are not effective in purifying a paapi! They do, indeed, purify a sinner, but not fully: *punanti, kintu samyak na punanti*. The Karmas of prayashchitta recommended by the Smritis destroy the paapas, but not the *vaasanaa* (avid desires) of the person. Vasanas cannot be destroyed by Karmas. Karmas have authority over those who are turned away from Bhagwan. They have no scope to reach the level of capacity to destroy lust and avid desires. Vasanas can be destroyed only by Bhakti and Gnan. A bhakta of Bhagwan does not get involved in Karmas of prayashchitta.

It should also be kept in mind that Karmas do cut away *karma* (the effect of sinful acts), but not totally. *Na hyaatyantika ishyate`*, because a person's vasanas remain in his heart. The prayashchittas are the subjects of an *a-bhakta* (one who is not a bhakta). Just like Brahmavidya, Bhakti is a sadhan for an absolute cutting away of karmas.

A person who is filled with strong desires indulges in wrongdoing at times, and abstains from sinful acts at times. His destroying his paapas is akin to an elephant's bath (elephants bathe in the wild and smear dust over their body after the bath). Paapas are destroyed by *tapa* (severe austerities done as penance), *daana* (giving in charity), *praayashchitta*, etc. A mind sullied by

hundreds of paapas is not easily purified. Bhagwan's bhakti is needed for complete purification.

Every one of the *navadhaa bhakti* (nine kinds of Bhakti) has the power to destroy all paapa. Here, however, the word 'bhakti' indicates only *shravana* (listening to, and absorbing the purport of spiritual discourses), because just as every cow is pointed out by touching its horn, the different methods of bhakti given in the Bhagwat – like shravan, kirtan, smaran, etc are also given in other Puranas.

A point worth noting is whether a person who once steps on the path of paapa continues to fall deeper into the morass of continuing to commit sin after sin, to his spiritual downfall. Sentences like, '*punardaridrah punare`va paapee`*' (repeated births filled with poverty lead to repeated sins) are found in the Puranas. A human being sins, and sins again and again. The Parameshwara also awakens the paapas and punyas of his past births and cycles of time the way He awakens Swarga and Narak in different eons of time, because He is too compassionate to create a world that is not balanced.

The principle of Vedanta explains the inequities of the world by connecting the person's deeds of past births to the condition and behavior in this life. Under the circumstances, a jeeva cannot become entirely free of the *parampara* (tradition handed from one generation to the next) of a person's paapa-punya, and their fruits.

A person can become free of his latent good and bad tendencies – and the resultant fruits – only by taking the *aashraya* (refuge) of talking about and listening to Bhagwan's *guna* (attributes), because they purify the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind – or subtle body – composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality).

What a beautiful verse this is:

*Vidyaa-tapa-praananirodha-maitri-teerthaabhishe`ka-vrata-daana-japyaih,
naatyantasiddhim labhate`antaraatmaa yathaa hridayasthe` bhagavatyanthe`.*

When Bhagwan, who is infinite, is established in the *hridaya* (heart), a person is purified completely. Along with this, we also accept that as a person utters the name of Bhagwan while doing *karma-anushthaana* (a Vedic ritual done for a specific goal) it enhances the quality of the Karma. The fruit increases. There is not the slightest doubt that wherever Bhagwan's naam is spoken, it will be a cause of *mangala* (good fortune; spiritual benefit) and *kalyaana* (great spiritual progress).

What I have affirmed is merely this – the principal purpose of all the Puranas is that Bhagwan's naam-kirtan is an independent method of destroying paapa; it is neither a residue nor part of any other method.

(3)

It is absolutely clear that the Smarta (of the Smritis) prayashchitta and the naam-sankirtan of Bhakti are not a joint method of destroying paapa. It is logical if we accept that naam-sankirtan is suitable method for a particular type of person, and a Smarta prayashchitta for another type. Or else, it is logical to accept that the inclination of an individual prompts him to decide which method he wishes to accept. Both *vikalpa* (alternatives) are logical.

Further on, I will show that both methods are actually illogical, because an *adhikaaree* (eligible person) has some *vishe'shataa* (special qualifications). For example, he may be *anutapta* (distressed), *agnaanee* (lacking Gnan), *shraddhaalu* (having faith), a bhakta, etc. Kirtan will purify a person only if he has these qualities. That means, certain qualities are required, if kirtan is to purify a person.

If that be the case, kirtan is not a *nirape`ksha saadhana* (a self-sufficient method); it becomes a *saape`ksha sadhana* (a method that needs support from some other). As we proceed we will examine each and every *ape`ksha* (need), and establish that kirtan has no need for any of them.

There remains the question of *vikalpa*. It is a fact that nobody would opt for a difficult method if they have the option of an easy one. Who would want to lift a heavy weight, if allowed to get away with a lighter load? Then – the Smarta prayashchitta given in the Smritis will become redundant.

If it is said that kirtan does not refute the Smarta prayashchittas; a person is free to use the method he wants and that both methods are equally important and give the same fruit, well – nobody will choose to give up the easier method! The difficult method will remain unused in the books of rituals.

Pravritti (activity) is the fruit of the Vidhi statements of the Smarta recommendations. It is a kind of *baadha* (negating) if people do not get involved in Vedic rituals. This is what Kumaril Bhatt has stated. This objection will be negated in due course.

Only remembering Krishna.

We will now give some thought to *vyavasthaa* (arrangement; system). I don't know why, but some gentlemen have a lot of attachment for the Smritis, and seem to be rather afraid of the Puranas. They talk about big prayashchittas for big paapas and small ones for small ones; different ones for paapa done intentionally and different for those done unknowingly; big prayashchittas for the blatant paapas, and small ones for the hidden ones. The Smarta prayashchitta is big and the *pauraanika* (of the Puranas) is smaller. This arrangement pleases the Smarta followers. However, the verses given below also merit some attention.

Paape`guruni guruni svalpaanyalpe`cha tadavidah,

praayashchittaani maitre`ya jaguh svaayambhuvaadayah.

Praayashchittaanyashe`shaani tapah karmaatmatmakaani vai,

yaani te`shaamashe`shaanaam krishnaanusmaranam param.

The purport is that Manu and others who have written the Smritis have given the ruling that big prayashchittas like tapa and Karmas are to be done for big paapas and smaller ones for lesser paapas. *Krishna-smarana* (remembering Krishna) is the only complete prayashchitta for all paapas.

This statement is given by Shridhar Swami himself! He states that thinking about Shri Krishna is the only prayashchitta for all paapas – without differentiating between paapas – and is right for all.

Is thinking about Shri Krishna lovingly *nididhyaasana* (bringing the mind repeatedly to one object, a part of Yoga)?

A learned gentleman who believed himself to be a single-minded *pakshapaati* (prejudiced in favor) of *brahmavidyaa* (knowledge about the Brahman) dropped in and presented a fresh angle to this discussion. He said, 'Very well. That is all right. Who can disagree with the fact that Shri Krishna-anusmaran destroys all paapas? But, do you know what Shri Krishna anusmaran actually is? It is Brahma-vidya! The meaning of *karshati* is the one who tears apart – the one who destroys agnan: *krishati iti vaa karshati iti vaa krishnah*. This well-known Smriti, in which 'krish' is said to be *sattaa* (pure existence) and 'na' to be the *nirvritti* (fruit), both are one. Meaning, the Param Brahman is Shri Krishna. Thinking repeatedly about that faultless Paramatma is Krishna anusmaran.

The repetition of the *sajaateeya* (of the same group), and rejecting the *vijaateeya* (of an alien group) is *nididhyasan*. It is Krishna anusmaran. It gives the fruit of the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the Atma-Tattva, and is the fruit of *shravana* (listening to and absorbing the purport of spiritual discourses). This destroys the paapas that create obstacles in a person's getting Tattvagan. A person can get Tattvagnan only after he becomes free of all paapa; when all paapa is destroyed by *nididhyasan*. Therefore, the meaning of Krishna anusmaran is *nididhyasan*, not naam-sankirtan.'

I explained to him, 'Punditji Maharaj, your interpretation is completely illogical and unseemly. It is true that the word Krishna means the Brahman, but the Krishna who is the dark-skinned, beloved son of Yashoda is astride the Brahman who is formless and attribute-less.

Yoga does not apply where the meaning is derived from the origin – this is a well-known *nyaaya* (logic). If you insist that the Brahman of the Yogis that is pure anand and the origin, then the gopis who were immersed in the ocean that is Shri Krishna, the cowherd boys who were His beloved friends, the enemies like Putana who feared Him, the animals who were aware only of the external world, the trees, creepers, etc that were granted the eternal happiness of Moksha, it should be accepted that Shri Krishna – the son of

Nanda – should be absorbed through all *vritti* (mental inclinations); not the *nirguna* (without form or attributes) Brahman!

When this name and image of Shri Krishna is used repeatedly, it is first the *nanda-nandana* (son of Nanda) Krishna whose image rises before us. Remembering Him is kirtan; not dhyana. You can see that this is what is eulogized in the concluding sentences.

Kva naakapristhagamanam punaraavrittilakshanam,

kva japo vaasude`ve`ti muktibeejamanuttamam.

Rebirth starts from Swarga. It is a far cry from the *naama-japa* (ritual chanting of Bhawan's name) of the One who is the seed of Mukti! Naam-japa is beyond compare! It is against all logic to think that the praises of naam-japa indicates a command to do nididhyasan!

And then, my learned friend, give some thought to this as well – does the *pratyag-vastu* (internal object) Atma ever descend, to dance in the courtyard of memories? Its being *pratyak* (internal) would be foiled!

Here, the naam indicates kirtan. The *naama-nare`sha* (the naam that is the supreme ruler) comes into the heart through kirtan, and destroys paapa. He is the axe that cuts away the tortures of Narak (Hell). He does not give any thought to whether the turnip is big or small. Therefore, the arrangement of doing a Smarta prayashchitta for a big paapa and naam-kirtan for a small paapa is singularly inappropriate.'

Mukti from all paapa.

Furthermore –

Avashe`naapi yannaamni keertite` sarvapaatakaih,

pumaanvimuchyate` sadyah simhatrastrastairmrigairiva.

Doing naam-kirtan even under duress frees a person instantly from all paapa. The word *sarva* (all) has been used with deliberation in the original text. The indication is that naam-kirtan frees a person from *mahaa-paapa* (great sins), *upapaataka* (minor offenses), and *prakeerna paataka* (miscellaneous sins). There is no delay – *sadya* means instantaneously. Therefore, there is no need

to reduce the great effect of kirtan by differentiating between great and small paapas.

The Shrimad Bhagwat has enumerated all the worst sins, and declared that uttering Bhagwan's name destroys any and all of them – '*sarve`shaamapyadhavataam, sarvapaatakaih.*'

Therefore, it would be unjust to constrict the shakti of kirtan in any way. That naam is effective even when a person speaks it unintentionally is evident in the episode of Ajamil. Ajamil was a paapi, fully aware of his wrongdoings. The greatness of the naam is the message of this episode, because Ajamil called out to his son Narayana; not to Bhagwan, and yet he was granted Moksha.

The Vishnu-dharma Purana contains a description of the great paapi Kshatrabandhu becoming supremely purified by uttering Bhagwan's name.

Naam-kirtan is free of the restrictions of adhikar.

Some people are of the opinion that only those who have *shraddha-bhakti* (faith and love for Bhagwan) are eligible for destroying their paapa through naam-kirtan. People who lack shraddha-bhakti are eligible for the prayashchitta of the Smarta principle.

This gives food for thought – shraddha-bhakti first, and then kirtan, for destroying paapa. What is the feeling of *saadhya-saadhana* (goal-method) in this like? How can there be paapa if shraddha and bhakti are present in the heart? And then, where is the need for kirtan to destroy paapa, if the heart is free of paapa?

Do kirtan, whether it is with shraddha or without shraddha; with bhakti or without bhakti. The first kirtan will destroy paapa and repeated kirtan will awaken a desire for Bhagwan, and increase shraddha and bhakti.

The Linga Purana says, 'Uttering the mantra "*Om namah neelakanthaaya*" releases a person from all paapa. It is inappropriate to say that only a person who feels remorse can be liberated from sin. Just tell me, please, who is to measure how big or small a paapa is, how great the remorse is, and how big is naam-kirtan?

If someone says that kirtan should be done until all paapa is destroyed – meaning, until the fruit of the kirtan is obtained – that is not proper either. Neither paapa, nor its removal, are measurable commodities. They are revealed by the Shastras. The Shastras say that if Bhagwan is remembered by even a *sanke`ta* (indication) *parihaasa* (jokingly), *te`ka* (as a support), or *tiraskaara* (disdainfully), it results in all paapa dropping off. If that is the case, the rule that paapa is destroyed when a person feels remorse and takes Bhagwan’s name, is annulled. Since it is said that paapa is destroyed even by asking, ‘What is the use of taking Bhagwan’s name?’ the idea that remorse must be felt before uttering Bhagwan’s name, for paapa to be destroyed, is a lie.

There is no bhakti in joking or showing lack of respect while taking Bhagwan’s name. Gnan is not necessarily present when a person eulogizes or indicates the Ishwara. It is said that uttering the word ‘sukrit’ (once) repeatedly, the name (of Bhagwan) taken also destroys paapa. That being the case, all the qualifications described as being required in an *adhikaaree* (person who is eligible) are redundant, and the destruction of paapa is *shastra-gamya* (known through the Shastras).

Repetition is not necessary.

It is enough to utter Bhagwan’s name just once; repetition is not necessary. Come; let us give some thought to this shloka:

Yad dvyaksharam naama gire`ritam nrinaam sakritprasangaadadhamaashu hanti tat,

pavitrakeerti tamalanghyashaasanam bhavaanaho dve`shti shivam shive`tarah.

While criticizing her father Daksha, Sati says that Bhagwan Shiva is *parama mangala* (supremely auspicious). His renown protects a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) like a thunderbolt, and establishes him in his own greatness. Brahma and other Devtas are incapable of disobeying Shiva. His name ‘Shiva’, of two syllables, is filled with love. It is so easy to utter! It gives immense happiness to anyone who utters it. It does not even need shraddha etc – just say it once; not many times, just once! The heart may or may not hold the meaning of the name Shiva – just uttering it with the tongue is

enough! It won't create an *apoorva* (latent fruit); it will immediately destroy all paapa, great and small!

Don't think that uttering Shiva's name disturbs His Samadhi, drawing His attention towards you, to shower Grace on you. No, no! Nothing of the sort! The naam itself favors you. There is no consideration of caste or community in its bestowing Grace. Grace is showered on any and every person who utters it. There is not the slightest doubt that it is a great misfortune if a person has *dve'sha* (aversion) for such a Shivaji!

Paapa is destroyed equally by *bhoga* (experiencing the suffering that is the fruit of paapa) and prayashchitta. See the case of Ajamil. The paapas of innumerable past births were erased by the prayashchitta of his uttering 'Narayana'. Don't try to find shraddha-bhakti in a case of helplessness! *Paapa-kshaya* (destruction of paapa) is not a fruit of the shraddha-bhakti in the person who utters the naam; it is the fruit of Bhagwan's name being spoken.

*E'te`naiva hyadhonosya kritam syaadadhyanishkritam,
yadaa naaraayanaaye`ti jagaada chaturaksharam.*

Ajamil is a paapi. His taking the name of his son is a *naamaabhaasa* (an illusion that he took Bhagwan's name). There was no interval between his uttering the four syllables of the name (Na-ra-ya-na) and the result. Even namabhasa is a cause of all paapa being destroyed. It is not a method of negation, like *aadityo yoopah* (the sun negates the darkness in a well by dispelling it), or *agni himasya* (fire negates ice by melting it). Both these are *pratyksha pramaana* (proved by perception). Praman is meant to establish a point. All these examples are used to show the *mahimaa* (greatness; glory) of the naam, as given in different Shastras.

The *brahma-vastu* (the object that is the Brahman) is difficult to comprehend, and therefore, it is explained repeatedly. In this, the meaning is the same. There is no *dosha* (fault) in it, just as there is no fault in repeated descriptions of the greatness of the naam. It is such an easy method that a paapi finds himself unable to believe in it!

Paapee (sinners) think, 'My paapa is so enormous; how can it be destroyed by such an easy method?' Their *ashraddhaa* (lack of faith) becomes the cause of their disdaining the naam. This disdaining is an additional paapa. Various methods are used to explain this again and again, in order to remove the dosha of ashraaddha.

For example, paapa is a fog and the naam is the sun. Paapa is fuel and the naam is the fire that burns it. Paapa is a disease and the naam is the *amrita* (elixir) that cures it.

Some people say, 'It is true that the naam has no need for *pashchaataapa* (remorse; repentance), shraddha, bhakti, *aavritti* (repetition) etc. However, these are all for an *adhikaaree* (eligible person) who is on his deathbed. If a person lying helplessly on his deathbed utters the naam, even once, all his innumerable paapas are destroyed.'

This, however, is the opinion of those who have faith in the naam, but the shraddha is not complete; it is partial. It is of a medium level. The shraddha of such people should not be rejected or disdained. The path to the *paramaarth* (highest goal) is described next.

(4)

The Puranas are in keeping with the Vedas.

Doubts regarding the greatness of the naam, and the *poorva-paksha* (first opinion) and *uttara-paksha* (answering opinion) about this, have been discussed. Now, the *siddhaanta* (principle) regarding this is presented.

The contradiction between the Smritis and the Puranas do not include the *vikalpa* (option), *vyavasthaa* (proper arrangement), or *samuchchaya* (assemblage) because they are not established in equal terms.

After all, what are the Smritis? The great Rishis of yore obtained Gnan from the Vedas and wrote about it in their own words. These are the Smritis.

And what are the Puranas? They are the Vedas! It is written in the Mahabharata and also in the Manu Smriti, 'The elaboration of the Vedas should be done through the Itihasa-Puranas.' That, which makes *poorna* (complete) is *puraana*. The Vedas cannot be expanded by the *a-ve`da* (that, which is not in keeping with the Vedas). An incomplete gold bangle cannot be made complete by a mirror.

It is useless to think that just as the quantity of milk is increased when water is added to it the Vedas can be expanded by any Itihasa-Puranas that are separate from the Vedas. Adding water to milk does not increase the milk – it reduces the milk content in the whole. Therefore, this doubt is illogical. The fact is the Vedas and the Puranas are both compilations that present some

specific meaning of the Paramartha. Both are *a-paurushe`ya* (not written by any human being). Meaning, they are *abhinna* (one, not separate). They are shown as separate because the words of the Vedas have to be pronounced in a particular style, but that is not the case where the Puranas are concerned.

The Puranas themselves state that they (the Puranas) are the Vedas incarnate. They are also called the *panchama ve`da* (the fifth Veda). Had they not been of the same category they would not have been considered the fifth Veda. The study of the *braahmana* (a section of the Vedas), Itihases, and the Puranas are to be undertaken in the course of obtaining Gnan about rituals like Yagnas etc, and the Brahman. This would not have been possible had the Puranas been *a-ve`da* (not compatible with the Vedas).

Bhagwan has, Himself, stated that He comes in the Vyasa Avatar, because He sees the declining interest in the Puranas with the passage of time. Then, as Veda Vyasa, He compiles the Puranas again. The names of the Avatars like Matsya, Koorma, etc are meant for the purpose of *pravachana* (discourses), or they are the cause of the order of succession.

In any contradiction between the Smritis (written by Mahatmas like Manu who read and rewrote the Vedas) and the Shrutis (Vedic verses) and Puranas, the Shrutis are given the greatest importance. However, where there is a contradiction between the Smritis and the Puranas, it is the Puranas that are considered greater important.

That being the case, the authenticity of the Puranas is infinite! The meanings propounded by them are authentic. It is absolutely illogical to think that accepting the statements given in the Puranas negates the subject matter given in the Smritis. What I mean to say is, let the Smritis be negated; the essence of the Puranas cannot be squashed in order to imagine any *vyavasthaa* (proper arrangement; order of things).

It is written in the Naradiya Purana that the *puraanaartha* (purport of the Puranas; benefits given by the Puranas) is even greater than the *ve`daartha* (purport of the Vedas, or the benefits given by the Vedas). The Vedartha is established in the Puranas. If even a *shanta-daanta* (one has gained control over mental and physical urges) person believes the Puranas to be *mithyaa*

(false; a relative truth) he does not obtain higher realms after death; he is reborn at a level lower than a human being.

The Skanda Purana states that the Shruti-Smriti are the eyes, and the Puranas are the *hridaya* (heart). A one-eyed person is called a *kaanaa*; a person who is blind is called *andhaa*, but if there are no puranas, there is no heart! Therefore, the Puranas are the logical victors in a conflict between the Smritis and the Puranas.

The purport of the Pauranik vyavastha.

It would be another matter altogether if someone were to say that he would have made a different vyavastha. The statements in the Puranas create their own vyavastha. For example, a person has *karmaadhikaara* (the eligibility for doing Karmas) until he develops *vairagya* (detachment for worldly considerations). When there is neither total vairagya nor total *aasakti* (worldly attachment) the person has *bhakti-yoga-adhikaara* (is eligible for Bhakti Yoga, meaning, attaching himself to Bhagwan, having love for Bhagwan). When he develops total vairagya he gets *gnaana-adhikaara* (becomes eligible for obtaining Gnan about the Brahman and the Atma being one). In this situation, why should those in favor of vyavastha blame us?

The answer to this is that this kind of a vyavastha is meant for a *mumukshu* (one who wishes to be free of worldly considerations). For a mumukshu there is a vyavastha for Karma, Bhakti, and Gnan, depending on the state of the *chitta* (mental inclinations). There is no contradiction in this. The words, '*siddhi* (success) is obtained according to a person's *vishvaasa* (firm conviction),' do not contain any measurement of kirtan etc. The shakti of kirtan has no limits. It is illogical to calculate the water in the ocean by weighing water in a vessel! The *prabhaava* (influence; might) of a mantra is uncontrolled. It is with the *maatras* (measure) of the vishwas that the power of a mantra is accepted.

Kirtan does not need shraddha.

The opinion of those who say that naam-sankirtan is fruitful only when done with shraddha, is not correct. What I mean to say is, if shraddha is the cause for the *vritti* (mental inclination for Bhagwan), then a person who starts to do kirtan without having shraddha will definitely get the fruit of the kirtan,

because kirtan is the cause of the fruit. That means his paapa will be destroyed if he does kirtan, whether it is with or without shraddha.

If you say that shraddha is the cause of paapa being destroyed by kirtan, then, how was the knowledge obtained, that shraddha is the cause of paapas being destroyed? Was it obtained through the Shastras, or was it through *pramaana* (proof that establishes) like *pratyaksha* (observed directly) etc?

There are many opinions and counter-arguments regarding this. If it is accepted that kirtan done with shraddha is the *aalambana* (support) for shraddha, it leads to *anavasthaa* (disorder; confusion) due to the cycle of *aatmaashraya* (taking refuge in the Atma), *anyonyaashraya* (any other support). Therefore, when the words of the Shastras are accepted as proof, it is not logical to believe that shraddha is required for kirtan to successfully destroy paapa. There is no objection to a person having shraddha and doing kirtan, but there can be no weakening in the fruit of kirtan. Meaning, kirtan destroys paapa under all circumstances.

The conclusion is that shraddha is not essential for paapa to be destroyed by naam-sankirtan.

The *poorva-paksha* (first statement) may be raised that in the Ayurveda system a person gets cured when he believes that the medicine given will cure him. Similarly, kirtan is beneficial when a person has faith in its efficacy.

The answer to this is that the *vishvaasa* (firm conviction) in the curative power of the medicine is from the viewpoint of the Shastra of Ayurveda. The connection between kirtan and paapa-kshaya, however, is not something that can be observed by the human eye. It is known only through the Shastras. It is *ateendriya* (beyond the scope of the senses). It does not need the help of shraddha. There is no need to make kirtan dependant on shraddha, with the illusion that shraddha is the cause of the power of kirtan for destroying paapa.

It is also worth noting that if a Karma (Vedic ritual) has many *anga* (parts), involves great expense, and has to be done for several years involving considerable difficulty in its implementation, it is obvious that no one would undertake such a Karma unless they have shraddha for it. There, the *adhikaaree* (eligible person) is a *shraddhaalu* (one who has shraddha).

However, where the sadhan is as easy as the kirtan, people are likely to prefer it as an alternative. It is not necessary that they do so with shraddha. The vyavastha of the Shastras is the same, so it is not logical to think that shraddha is a vital component of kirtan.

Bhakti comes after doing kirtan, not before!

It is equally illogical to imagine that kirtan will destroy paapa only if the person has bhakti. If someone is of the opinion that kirtan should be done after acquiring *navadhaa bhakti* (nine kinds of bhakti), then, a person eligible for kirtan would have to be endowed with navadha bhakti of which kirtan is one! This is self-contradictory.

If you say that a person is eligible for kirtan if he has *bhaava-bhakti* (love for Bhagwan) – well, bhava-bhakti is the fruit of kirtan; it is not a qualification of the person before he begins to do kirtan. It can certainly be said that a person should do kirtan with the desire to obtain bhava-bhakti. It is correct to say that kirtan should be done to remove the *dosha* (faults; flaws) that come from doing paapa. Kirtan destroys paapa.

Some people say that it is true that doing *bhagavd-bhajana* (singing Bhagwan's glories; kirtan) after bhakti has arisen in the heart destroys paapa. However, a person should also do the prayashchitta given by the Smarta principle, in order to destroy the paapa done before bhakti arose.

Such thinking is not based on profound thought, or a comprehensive understanding of our Shastras. The rising of love for Bhagwan happens after paapa are destroyed by kirtan.

Even after paapa is destroyed, various kinds of *kaamanaa* (desires) remain in the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind, or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankara* = subtle pride of individuality). These desires drive a person towards the wrong kind of *vaasaaa* (avid desires). Love for Bhagwan is needed for the removal of these vasanas; not for paapa-kshaya.

The Puranas are full of episodes in which Yamaraj (the presiding deity of Death; the ruler of Narak) instructs his *doota* (messengers): 'Be careful! Don't even,

even by mistake, go to the Sant (Mahatmas) who have *pre`ma* (pure love) for Bhagwan. Stay away from them. They are not under my jurisdiction.'

The point is: where does the question of Yamadootas going to Bhagwat-premi Sants arise? The Sants have no paapa; nor are they paapis. What is the purport of this warning?

It is true that there is no paapa anywhere near the Mahapurushas. Even if raaga-dvesha are absent, it is possible that some lapse may occur due to an oversight, and this is removed by naam-kirtan. Even there, it is naam-kirtan that removes paapa. *Bhaava* (feeling) remains aloof. Why should a superior person get entangled with the lowly? There is no question of taking such Satpurusha to the realm of Yamaraj! The fact is, even people who live in close proximity with Satpurusha are beyond Yamaraj's jurisdiction!

This is why Yamaraj instructs his messengers: 'Don't even go to any place where a Sant has his hut. Stay away from that place.'

The Upanishads also have episodes where Mahatmas who have obtained *bhagwad-bhaava* (love for Bhagwan) or *sarvaatma-bhaava* (the feeling that the Atma of all is one) become free from the rule of Yamaraj. Not only that, everything within their range of vision also becomes beyond the jurisdiction of Yamaraj and his dootas.

It is well-known that *teertha* (holy places) purify a person who lives there over a long period of time. A glimpse of a Sant, however, purifies a person at once! It may be that a Sant looks at the person, or the person sees the Sant – both are *paavana* (purifying).

The sound of kirtan spreads in all directions, renting apart all obstacles on the path of spiritual progress. Kirtan is a method of paapa-kshaya for even the blind and the deaf! Bhakti is not an essential part of kirtan; nor is it a qualification for a person to be eligible for kirtan.

Gnan is not mandatory in kirtan.

The Ishwara is the only worthy subject of kirtan, but Gnan about the Ishwara is not a stipulation for kirtan to destroy paapa. Paapa is destroyed when a person utters Bhagwan's naam, whether out of helplessness, in some reference, in a

joke, etc. It has been established that there is no other purport in these statements, since they have been given repeatedly in all Shastras. Naam-sankirtan can even give Moksha (freedom from worldly considerations); paapa-kshaya is a trifle by comparison.

See, the Shastras give this clear command:

*Agnaanaadathavaa gnaanaaduttamashlokanaama yat,
sankeertitamagham punsaam dahatye`dho yathaanalah.
Yathaagadam veeryatamamupayuktam yadrichchayaa,
ajaanatopyaatmagunaan kuryaanmantropyudaahritah.
Harirharati paapaani dushtachittairapi smritah,
anichhayaapi sansprishto dahatye`va hi paavakah.*

Whether uttered with Gnan or without Gnan, Bhagwan's naam causes the destruction of paapa. *Agni* (fire) is given as an example, because it burns whoever touches it, whether the person has Gnan about its power to burn or not. Mantras manifest their power, whether a person has Gnan about it or not. When a person, whose mind is filled with wicked thoughts, remembers Hari (Bhagwan), his paapa is destroyed just as fire burns anyone who touches it.

Naa-rahya-na, with four syllables; *Shi-va*, with two syllables; *Ha-ri*, with two syllables – all show that the naam does not need that the person has knowledge about the meaning of the name, for it to be effective in destroying the paapa of a person who utters it.

The conclusion is: Gnan is not an essential factor in the method of naam-sankirtan. Gnan is obtained when paapa has been destroyed by doing naam-kirtan. This would be reversed if a person were to be expected to obtain Gnan before he does kirtan! It is not appropriate to try to make the fruit the method (of obtaining the fruit).

Kirtan does not require remorse.

Some people are of the opinion that when a person feels remorse for the sins he has done, his paapa is destroyed when he utters Bhagwan's naam; but if he does not feel remorse, he should do naam-kirtan repeatedly.

This *vyavasthaa* (arrangement; system), too, is not accepted fully. The main point of discussion is whether paapa is destroyed by the power of the *vidhi* (command of the Smritis) or by the power of Bhagwan's name. If it is achieved through the power of the Vidhi, *pashchaataapa* (remorse, repentance) is necessary in both places, because only a person who repents his eligible for prayashchitta.

If paapa is destroyed by the power of the naam, prayashchitta becomes unnecessary. The sun removes the darkness for the *tapasvee* (ascetic) as well as the *bhogee* (one who indulges in worldly pleasures). The essence of the substance is unaffected by the eligibility of the person.

It is certain that the naam destroys paapa by its own greatness; not by the capacity of the *vidhaana* (laws; ruling). Vidhis are of two kinds: one is the *keertitavya* and the other statements, and the other is *kaarya*. The first is the form of *pramaana* (proof; something that is established). Praman does not create a greatness that is not already present in the *prame`ya* (that, which is established). It only reveals the Tattva of the *vastu* (object) that already exists. Shabar Swami has stated truly, by saying that people don't have knowledge about the *upaaya* (method for achieving something), and that is why the upaya is explained to them.

Shri Sureshwara Acharya, the author of Naishkarmya Siddhi, states that the Shastras are like the sun. The sun shows us how we can obtain or remove things. If the method of the Vidhi is an *anushtana* (ritual done for a specific goal) of naam-kirtan, it will immediately produce the fruit of the method. The name itself is *paavana* (purifying) and *paapa-nivartaka* (remover of paapa). Does the sun need to rise more than once, to dispel darkness? No. It rises, and the darkness is dispelled. Taking the naam just once is enough for paapa to be destroyed.

That being the case, what more can we say about the statements of the Shastras that speak of repentance and repeated titles?

The conclusion is that when a person repents the sins he has committed, remembering the name of Hari (Bhagwan) is the only prayashchitta. This proves that kirtan is a method for paapa-kshaya. Kirtan is not the principal meaning of the word 'prayashchitta'. *Prayah* = *tapa* (doing penance), *chitta* = *nischaya* (decision). Kirtan is neither *tapa*, nor *nishchay*. The purport of this is that just as prayashchitta is a sadhan for *hita* (the good of a person), so is kirtan.

What is hita?

Hita is the obtaining of sukha and the removal of *anartha* (misfortune). Kirtan is the hita that removes anartha. This makes it clear that kirtan comes from Vidhi. The removal of factors that cause suffering is hita. A person whose suffering is caused by his paapa gets hita when he does kirtan, because kirtan destroys the paapa that is the cause of his suffering. The repeated use of words like *parama* (supreme), *e`kama* (one only), and *sakrita* (done well) show that kirtan is a *nirape`ksha saadhana* (self-sufficient method).

It is certainly true that sankirtan is not at all a difficult thing to do. Therefore, it is not necessary that a person who feels remorse will do this sadhan. People may get involved in sankirtan by seeing others, or hearing about its benefits. Nor is it that sankirtan gives its fruit only if the person wants his sins to be destroyed!

If a person does a Yagna, he will get Swarga, but a Yagna is such a difficult undertaking that people are not likely to start doing it because they see others do it, or hear about its benefits. The Shastras tell us that we should give up desires; we should undertake Karmas (rituals) only to please Bhagwan – or for the good of all – not for the fulfillment of personal desires.

Avritti (repetition) and paapa-kshaya.

We have now reached the conclusion that naam-kirtan is the method for destroying paapa. Then, what is the need for *aavritti* (repetition)? Why should we chant Bhagwan's name repeatedly? Past paapa is removed by kirtan, and the possibility of future paapa is removed by avritti. Let us give this some thought.

It is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat that if the *mana* (emotional mind) is inclined to wrongdoing even after a person has done prayashchitta, it means that his prayashchitta is not *e`kaantika* (directed to one object). Kirtan of Bhagwan's naam, done again and again makes the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind – or subtle body – composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality) pure. This means, avritti is a sadhan for *atyanta shuddhi* (extreme purity).

What is atyanta shuddhi?

Atyanta shuddhi is the destruction of paapa along with vasanas. For the *mumukshu adhikaaree* (a person who is eligible for obtaining liberation from worldly considerations; becoming free of the cycle of rebirth) there is only *karma-bandha-nikrintana* (cutting away the fruits of the karmas) and *teertha-padaanukeertana* (repeated kirtan of holy words).

A person whose support is Keshava (Shri Krishna) cannot be harmed by Yamaraj, or receive any suffering inflicted by Yamadootas. Moksha is the subject when *ashtaatakshara brahmavidyaa* (The eight letter mantra of Shri Krishna) is being discussed, and the param shuddhi is being discussed, and the subject is Moksha.

Or else, you can understand it this way – all paapa was destroyed by uttering Bhagwan's naam just once, but because of *a-shraddhaa* (lack of faith) the *bhrama* (false understanding) of the person's own lack of purity was not dispelled. In that condition, the person's dukha will not be removed. Avritti is needed to remove the bhram.

It is also said that doing naam-kirtan once destroys the *a-praarabdha paapa* (the paapa that are not caused by *praarabdha* (fate created by past actions), but repeated naam-kirtan is needed to destroy paapa done because of *prarabdha*. This is the explanation.

Mrityu (death) and kirtan.

Some people think that *naama-uchchaarana* (uttering Bhagwan's name) destroys all paapa, even if it is done without *shraddhaa-vishvaasa* (faith; strong conviction), but that this applies only to saying His name at the time of death. Saying this reveals a lack of profound thought. The word *mriyamaana* (close to

death) is used for Ajamil. However, give your attention to the first half of the shloka.

Mriyamaano hare`rnaama grihnaan putropachchaaritam,

ajaamilopyagaaddhaama kimuta shraddhayaa grinan.

The meaning here is not that a dying man should take Bhagwan's name. The purport of this shloka is that Ajamil was lying semi-conscious, close to death. There was no scope for shraddha. He uttered the name 'Narayana', calling out to his son; and yet he got Mukti. If uttering the naam gives such good fortune even under such circumstances, how much greater would be the benefits if the naam is taken with full awareness! The intended meaning of this episode is not that Bhagwan's name should be taken at the time of death. In fact, Ajamil recovered and, since his paapa was destroyed, he progressed on the path of Bhakti.

Bhagwan's name should be taken at the time of death.

Who says this? To utter Bhagwan's name at the exact moment of death is not possible. So, to say this is to ask for impossibility.

Kirtan is separate from anushthana.

In an *anushthaana* (ritual done for a specific goal) done as per the Vidhi, it is necessary to say the naam following certain rules like a certain number of times, at special times like during an eclipse, at specific places like on a mountains, sitting on a grass mat, etc. Like the ritual of fire worship, there is a *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impression implanted through a formal initiation) for any anushthana or *purushcharana* (preliminary rite). These are undertaken for worldly or other-worldly benefits. Therefore, they are not useful in the process of uttering Bhagwan's naam for the purpose of destroying paapa.

Mental purity is for a mumukshu.

A *mana* (emotional mind) that is *e`kaagra* (focused), *pavitra* (pure), keeping *mauna* (a period of silence), meditating on the meaning of a mantra, etc are not essential for *naama-uchchaarana* (uttering the naam). They help in enriching *japa* (ritual chanting), which is necessary for the success of a

sakaama japa (for the fulfillment of some specific desire). Paapa-kshaya is achieved by kirtan.

Another viewpoint is that japa is a different matter and kirtan is a different matter altogether. The factors mentioned above are necessary for japa, but not for kirtan. The naam purifies the *hridaya* (heart), but there is no rule that says kirtan should be done only after the hridaya has been purified.

Where *niyama* (rules) are mentioned regarding kirtan, it is when kirtan is done as a part of *moksha-saadhanaa* (effort to obtain Moksha), not for paapa-kshaya. Just as Samadhi-Gnan is a *saadhana* (method) for Moksha, so is kirtan.

Kirtan is not a *saakshaat* (incarnate) sadhan like *shravana* (listening to and grasping the purport of spiritual discourses); it is a sadhan for removing the obstacles on the spiritual path that are created by an impure antahkarana.

The *krama* (serial order) for doing kirtan for Moksha.

Kirtan destroys paapa. Repeated kirtan increases the desire for Bhagwan and reduces worldly desires. The person is inclined to do *se`vaa* (render service) to Sants (Mahatmas who have surrendered themselves completely to Bhagwan). Listening to Mahatmas speak on Bhagwan's *mahimaa* (greatness) gives rise to staunch bhakti for Bhagwan. Sattva (pure existence) is uplifted. This is followed by *tattva-saakshaatkaara* (a direct personal experience of the Tattva), and then the person obtains Moksha.

This serial order can be observed in the Shrimad Bhagwat. If a person doesn't get Gnan even after doing shravan of the Vedas, due to some obstacle caused by agnan etc, Bhakti removes that obstacle. If the person is unable to do Vedanta-shravan, Bhagwan Himself gives him the teaching at the time of his death.

Naam-kirtan is *ve`dokta* (spoken of by the Vedas).

Bhagwan's kirtan etc can be done using any of His names or mantras. That kirtan is an authentic method for obtaining the Gnan that bestows Mukti (Moksha) is revealed in many places in the Vedas where the greatness of the naam is described. Mantras like '*manaamahe`*', '*vivakmi`*' etc should be investigated. Wherever any Dharma is mentioned in connection to kirtan, it is

not for paapa-kshaya; it is for *amritattva-saadhana* (a method for obtaining the Amrita that bestows immortality). This is the reason for the Puranas having amazing stories.

There was a *vyaadha* (hunter) called Vyadinabha. He was inclined to violence and he also encouraged others to kill. When unwary travelers passed through the forest, he would call out to his companions (who kept hidden). When he said '*aahaara*' (food) it meant they were to rob the people. '*Prahaara*' meant that they were to kill the people. His accidental use of the wrd '*hara*' (Shiva) removed his paapa. In his next birth he obtained Tattvagnan.

Naam-kirtan is a Vidhi.

Wherever Vidhi (rite) is used there are considerations about why the Karma is done, through whom it is done, and the manner in which it is done. These duties are described. Since kirtan requires none of these, how can it be called a Vidhi?

The answer to this is, the statements of Vidhi include being truthful, having forbearance, etc. These are not accompanied by any teaching about any *anga* (part) of the Vidhi. However, aren't they statements of Vidhi? Certainly they are! If any assistance is needed for them, it is from the tongue, mouth, throat etc combining to utter Bhagwan's name.

All right. Please tell me – just as there is an *apoorva* (latent fruit) that is created by specific rituals – and this process cannot be known by any other method of establishing it – what is wrong if it is said that kirtan is a method for creating the apoorva for paapa-kshaya? It is established that kirtan destroys paapa successfully, without any obstacles. It is not possible to cover up this fact.

The shakti of each name is infinite.

The question is, every name of Bhagwan is filled with so much shakti – is it the shakti of the combined names, or is it from some specific names?

It is wrong to say this, because then the creation of *naraka* (Hell) will become meaningless. Even when past paapa is destroyed, subsequent sins – or disdaining a Mahapurusha – give Narak. Thus, the creation of Narak is also meaningful.

The *aasakti* (strong worldly attachment) Raja Bharat developed for a deer became an obstacle in his attaining the fruit of his *upaasanaa* (loving worship), and the *anugraha* (Grace) of Rishabhdev. Jay and Vijay lost their position in Vaikuntha (the realm of Bhagwan Vishnu), for disdaining the Sanat Kumars. Bhagwan has stated clearly, 'I will cut off My own arms if they do anything that goes against a Mahatma.'

It is well-known that Bhagwan is captivated by His bhaktas. The greatness of one *chintaamani* (wish-fulfilling gem) is the same as that of thousands of chintamanis. Even if there were many *kaama-dhe`nu* (wish-fulfilling cows), and *kalpa-vriksha* (wish-fulfilling trees), their greatness does not increase. The greatness of any naam of Bhagwan is unlimited. It is also certain that *naama-aparaadha* (offence against His name) is also removed by the naam.

The Smarta prayashchitta is not futile.

Under the circumstances, are the Smarta prayashchittas totally useless? The answer to this question is, no. The Smarta parashchittas are also profitable. The Puranas have also accepted that paapa is removed by tapa, daan, and vrata. The Smarta prayashchittas are futile only when it is said that people should do only kirtan and nothing else.

The buddhi of people is generally caught in *a-shraddhaa* (lack of faith), so there can be no rule that they can get involved in uttering Bhagwan's name by *sanke`ta* (indication), *parihaasa* (jokingly), etc. Therefore, there is full scope for the Smarta prayashchittas.

It is seen that some people are inclined towards simple treatments for minor ailments, whereas others prefer something more complicated. People have their personal preferences. There are some people who want to be given the most expensive and advanced treatment for even the smallest health problem. The fact is, when a person's heart is filled with the wrong kind of desires it is invariably turned away from Purushottama (Bhagwan). Such a person is not capable of getting involved in naam-kirtan. The Smarta prayashchitta is suitable and successful for them.

The mahima of kirtan is a fact.

It is said that the fruit of an Ashvamedha Yagna, and the fruit of Gnan, is equal. It is also said, '*kaamanaapoorti* (fulfillment of the desire with which the Yagna is undertaken) happens only with the *poornaahuti* (the concluding oblation).' If these statements are accepted at face value, why should anyone undertake a Karmanushthana? The whole fruit of a Vedic ritual can be obtained by Gnan and the poornahuti. Therefore, this has to be accepted as Arthavad (a materialistic viewpoint, where something is done for a worldly benefit). However, this cannot be given as an example to consider the greatness of naam-kirtan to be Arthavad! Gnan (knowledge) is an *anga* (part) of a Yagna. First obtain knowledge about the Ashvamedha Yagna and then do the ritual. Do the Yagna first, and then do the poornahuti.

Naam-kirtan, on the other hand, is neither an anga of a Smarta prayashchitta, nor is prayashchitta futile because of naam-kirtan. The *mahimaa* (greatness) of naam-kirtan is, therefore, a fact. It is not Arthavad.

The purpose of the *nibandha* (essay).

Very well; I now want an answer to one question. In your opinion, naam-kirtan destroys paapa, even if it is done without shraddha. Is it not so? Then tell me, what was the need to write such a lengthy composition? What purpose has it served? It is shraddha that you are establishing through this. Now you are on the right path.

The answer is: this is true. Naam-kirtan does remove paapa, but ashaddha is the reason why mental suffering is not removed. Therefore, this essay was written with the purpose of removing ashaddha, and obtaining mental peace.

Chapter 4.

The Quintessence of the Bhakti Prakash in Veermitrodaya.

Bhagwan's nature is such that He manifests in Uttara's womb with His mace, to protect the life of her unborn baby. He knew that one day this child would listen to the Bhagwat.

The purpose of this is, a person whose future life carries the seed of Bhakti, who will do shravan, kirtan, and *smarana* (remembering Bhagwan) in later years, gets Bhagwan's protection. Bhagwan destroys his *paapa-taapa* (sins-suffering).

The *graaha* (crocodile) caught the foot of Gajendra – the King of the elephants – in anger. Had Prabhu (Bhagwan) wanted, He could have sent His Chakra (divine discus) from afar to kill the crocodile and free Ganjendra. However, His compassion made Him go into the water, kill the graha, and lift Gajendra out of the lake. He liberated the *gaja* (elephant) as well as the *graaha* (crocodile).

When Draupadi was being shamed in public in the Court of the Kauravas, she called out to Krishna, '*Dvarikaavaasi*' (one who lives in Dwarika). It was a taunt.

‘Don’t You see I am being disrobed in public?’ Her distress pierced Shri Krishna’s heart. Before the Mahabharata war took place, He repeatedly thought, ‘I owe Draupadi a debt. I am unable to repay it. Draupadi had to call out loudly to Me to come and save her!’ It seems as though Shri Krishna destroyed the Kauravas only to pay His debt to Draupadi!

Bhagwan cupped deadly poison in His hands and drank it to protect the Devtas (divine powers) and Daityas (demonic powers) who took *sharana* (refuge) in Him. He gives His own status to the people, monkeys, birds and other creatures that die in Kashi (Benares).

Bhagwan abides in the heart of Brahmaji and gives him Gnan about the Vedas, and Brahmanji then creates this interactive world.

Bhagwan is the *maayaa-pati* (Master of Maya, His power of illusion). He uses the *upaadhi* (superimposition connected to something; attribute) of Maya for the attributes of being *sarvagna* (all-knowing), *sarva-kartaa* (doer of everything), *sarva-niyantaa* (controller of all), *sarva-paalaka* (protector of all), *sarva-samhartaa* (destroyer of all).

In *loka-vyavahaara* (worldly interaction) Bhagwan is known in the forms of *ramaa-pati* (the husband of Laxmi), or *umaa-pati* (the husband of Parvati). He is the *saguna* (with attributes) Parameshwara who is worthy of worship. I will speak more about His *svaroopa* (essence, true form) later. His *bhajana* (singing His name and glory lovingly) is such that a person becomes free of dukha. It fills the one who does bhajan with *paramaananda* (supreme joyfulness). By His *anugraha* (Grace) bhajan gives the Gnan by which a person can cross over the sea of this world.

All these statements are made in the beginning of the section called Bhakti Prakash, in the treatise called Veermitrodaya. It is a great work on the Dharma Shastras. This is one of the most highly respected works on the Shastra dealing with Dharma. It is written by the great Master Shrimitra Mishra. It contains some two hundred thousand shlokas. Many portions of this great work have been published. Pundit Shri Padmaprasad Upadhyaya has written the preamble, in which he described the *mahimaa* (greatness; glory) of Bhakti in detail.

In the opinion of Shri Upadhyaya Bhakti Yoga (attaching yourself to Bhagwan through Bhakti) is a powerful method for spiritual progress for an *adhikaaree* (one who is qualified) and also for an *anadhikaaree* (ineligible person).

Furthermore, Bhakti Yoga has no scope for a *pratyavaaya* (adverse reaction; backlash) or *patana* (spiritual downfall), resulting in suffering. A person can easily obtain Tattvagnan and Mukti (Moksha; liberation from all worldly considerations) through Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti removes obstacles. It protects those who take *sharana* (refuge) in it. It grants the fulfillment of a bhakta's desires. Nobody can obtain *brahmagnaana* (Gnan about the Brahman) without Bhakti. This is quoted in the Upanishads.

The sages of yore have given thought to the *lakshana* (characteristics) of Bhakti. Vardhaman Upadhyaya has written in Dravyakiranavali that Bhakti is *gnaanatvavyaapta jaativishe'sha* (the kind of Bhakti that is pervaded by Gnan). In the opinion of some people the Gnan that illuminates the Tattva is worshipped, is Bhakti.

Madhusudan Saraswati has said that *bhaagvata-dharma* – meaning, when the *chitta* (mental inclinations; trend of thoughts) – has become malleable by an *anushtana* (ritual) involving shravan etc, the *vritti* (natural tendency) flows steadily towards the *sarve'shvara* (the Ishwara of all). The *vritti's* taking the form of Bhagwan is Bhakti.

[Shri Vallabha Acharyaji Maharaj is of the opinion that Bhakti is when a person feels an overwhelming love for Bhagwan, combined with Gnan about Bhagwan's greatness. Shri Roop Goswami has said that Bhakti is when a person wants to please Shri Krishna by doing everything that is pleasing to Him. Bhaktas say that serving the real Swami – Lord – of our senses is the most superior Bhakti.]

All these characteristics of Bhakti are *gnaana-pradhaana* (dominated by Gnan) or *rasa-pradhaana* (dominated by sweet emotion), or common to both.

What should the characteristics of Bhakti be, according to the Dharma Sahstras? All right, then, listen – bhakti is a Karma – a ritual – of the Shastras by which love for Bhagwan rises in the heart. You can say that Bhakti is when everything that is *vihit* (prescribed by the Shastras) is done with the sole desire

of obtaining *bhagvat-pre`ma* (pure love for Bhagwan). The one and only purport of this is that when Yagnas and other rituals are done with the desire to obtain Swarga, it is not Bhakti! The word *vihit* indicates that meaningless actions like thrashing water cannot be Bhakti!

This gives rise to a question – can the characteristics of Bhakti include *fala-bhakti* (when Bhakti is the fruit), or *paraa-bhakti* (highest Bhakti)? If not, the *dosha* (fault) of *avyaapti* (not being pervasive) comes into the characteristic.

The *samaadhaana* (meeting point; resolve) of this is: the prescribed Karmas, done with the sole purpose of obtaining love for Bhagwan, are also *saadhana* (methods) for experiencing that *sukha* (happiness, contentment and peace) that comes from Bhakti for Bhagwan. Therefore, here, the *saadhya* (goal) is included in the *sadhan*.

The second question is: since *saadhya-bhakti* (the Bhakti for which a spiritual aspirant strives) is *sukha-roopa* (the form of sukha), Bhakti is a Purushartha (one of the principal goals in life. The four Purusharthas are Artha = worldly success, Dharma = doing ordained duties and living according to the rules of the Shastras, Kama = fulfillment of worldly desire, and Moksha = freedom from all worldly considerations). To strive for Bhakti is right and proper. However, *saadhana-bhakti* (Bhakti that is the goal for which a spiritual aspirant uses different methods) is not a *sukha-roopa* Purushartha (where *sukha* is the goal that is achieved). Then why should any intelligent person strive for it?

The answer to this question is: the *parama-purusha* (highest Purushartha) is the one in which the desire for the goal is not dependant on any other desire.

Nitya sukha (eternal sukha) is called Moksha, and *anitya* (temporary) sukha is called *kaama* (desire). Kama is also a Purushartha. However, why are Dharma and Artha called Purusharthas? They have neither *dukha-abhaava* (absence of dukha) nor sukha. Then, why do people strive to obtain them?

If it is said that they are Purusharthas because they are methods for removing dukha and obtaining sukha, then the *sadhan-bhakti* can also be called a Purushartha. This contains sukha during the *anushthana*, and also has the capacity to remove dukha. Furthermore, it has the capacity to give Moska

through Tattvagnan. Just as people endeavor to attain Artha and Dharma in order to obtain sukha, it is right for people to try to get Bhakti.

For a *virakta adhikaaree* (one who has the qualification of detachment) it is proper to do *shravana* (listen to and grasp the purport of spiritual discourses), *manana* (meditate on spiritual matters) etc, in order to obtain Tattvagnan. A person who is *shaanta-daanta* (able to restrain his mental and physical urges) is an *adhikaaree* (eligible person; qualified) for shravan-manan. A *vishayaasakta* (one who has strong worldly desires) person is an adhikari for Karma (Vedic rituals).

However, a person whose detachment is not total, and his urge for worldly pleasures is not very strong, is an adhikari for Bhakti Yoga (attaching himself to Bhagwan through loving devotion). Bhagwan Himself gives Gnan to a Bhakti Yogi.

If a person has *shraddhaa* (faith) in Bhagwan's *kathaa* (discourses about Bhagwan), *vairagya* (detachment) for Swarga, etc, but is unable to give up *bhoga* (sensual pleasures) in spite of knowing the suffering it results in, he should take a firm resolve with shraddha and prema in his heart, and do Bhagwan's bhajan. Even while indulging in bhoga he should think about the dukha bhoga leads to. He should not delude himself into believing that bhoga is a necessary part of life.

Bhagwan comes and sits in the hriday when a person continues to do bhajan with faith. *Vaasanaa* (avid desires; lust) is destroyed. The *hridaya-granthi* (imaginary knot that ties a person to worldly attachments) is broken. All doubt is cut away. Karmas (actions that give fruit) are diminished. All this happens as soon as a person gets the *darshana* (glimpse; vision) of the Paramatma.

Therefore, a person who has bhakti usually gets *kalyaana* (liberation from worldly bondage) even if he does not have Gnan-vairagya. Here, the word Gnan means *adhyaatma-vichaara* (thinking deeply about spiritual matters), not *mukhya-gnaana* (the principal Gnan; enlightenment), because mukhya-gnan is the Paramatma's darshan. Even if a person does not give up bhoga, Gnan about the *saguna* (with attributes) Brahman he worships, is essential. The fruit of bhajan is Buddhi Yoga (attaching himself to Bhagwan through his intellect).

It is through Buddhi Yoga that Bhagwan is obtained. If a person gets Buddhi Yoga he does not need to do any karma-anushthana for *jignaasaa* (a wish to obtain knowledge) to arise. Bhagwan's bhakti gives him everything. Whenever a bhakta does a Dharma-anushthana, it is for pleasing Bhagwan, not for any personal gain. This also comes within the *se`vaa* (rendering service) as a *daasa* (servant).

All the different kinds of sadhan-bhakti are a result of Dharma done in past lives. *Daana* (giving in charity), *vrata* (voluntary austerities), *tapa* (asceticism), *homa* (offering oblations into the sacred fire), *japa* (ritual chanting), *svaadhyaya* (study of the Shastras), *samyama* (restraining mental and physical urges), and other *shre`ya* (beneficial activities) are methods for obtaining Bhagwan's Bhakti.

Kaamyakarma (rituals done to obtain some worldly goal) are done for *jignasa* to arise. It is essential that all parts of the Karma are done correctly. In the *bhakti-paksha* (the principle of Bhakti), however, even a faulty anushthana removes paapa. A person who wants to just please Bhagwan with no other worldly benefit in mind, considering himself to be Bhagwan's servant, may have an *ashuddha* (impure) *antahkarana* (fourfold mind, or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality) can be involved in shravan, kirtan etc. It is possible that he does not strive to obtain Gnan, or that he does not give profound thought to spiritual matters, but even so he gets success.

The *roopa-re`khaa* (outline) of a buddhi that is offered up to the Ishwara is: let my Beloved send me wherever He wants, to Narak or to Swarga, or discard me completely. I have no need for such meaningless talk. My only duty is to serve Bhagwan, who is filled with anand!

Gamayatu narakam vaa svargaati vaa tanotu,
kshipatu sa paramaatmaa yatrakutraapi chaasmaan,
alamalamanayaa nashcharcharyaa kintu karmma,
satatasukhamayasya shreepate`re`va se`vaa.

When a person gets such a strong desire to serve Bhagwan, with an immense shraddha for shravan-kirtan, an incomparable *rasa* (sweet emotion; love) wells up in his heart. His chitta no longer inclines towards any other *vishaya* (worldly pleasure) or *vastu* (object). A bhakta of this category is not a *mukhya adhikaaree* (principally qualified) for Karmas; his eligibility for Karmas is *gauna* (secondary). If he gets engrossed in Bhagwan's *kathaa* (discourses about Bhagwan), and neglects doing religious rituals it is not a *dosha* (fault). Between the *gauna* and the *mukhya*, it is always the *mukhya* that is stronger. The responsibility of removing all his faults and ornamenting him with all the *sad-guna* (good qualities) is on Bhagwan.

A person gets involved in *bhajana* (singing Bhagwan's glories; loving meditation) because of *rasaanubhooti* (experiencing *rasa*); he is not even conscious of *dukha*! The chitta gets true repose. This is why Bhakti is a param Purushartha in spite of being a sadhan.

Chintana (giving profound thought to spiritual matters) gives extreme *sukha* after *avidyaa* (nescience; considering the outside world to be of paramount importance) is removed. Yagnas like the Rajasuya Yagna give *sukha* when they bestow the desired fruit. It is not an *anushtana* like *Jyotishtoma* that gives fruit in this very lifetime. Bhakti brings Prabhu (Bhagwan) – who is Paramananda – into the heart during the sadhan.

Elders have said, 'A person has to endure physical stress during a *karmanushtana*. Who knows whether they will get *sukha* in future or not? But all labor and fatigue disappear as soon as you mentally meet Nandanandan (the son of Nanda; Shri Krishna), *murlimanohara* (the enticing flute-player) Shayamsudar (blue-hued, beautiful) Krishna!

Ateeva khe`dah khalu karmakaale`ko ve`da bhaaveeni sukhaani kaani,

kansaarisamse`vanakaala e`va sansaarakhe`dah prashamam prayaati.

At every step the Vedas present the principle that Nandanandan Govind is the essence of Paramananda, since time immemorial. In spite of this, disbelievers with an impure *antahkarana* give false arguments that misrepresent the Shastras. That is their business, but the tears of joy that come to your eyes when you think of Nandanandan – who is the *jeevanadhana* (wealth of life),

and sweetness personified – the repose your hriday gets and the thrill you feel, can never be changed by their false arguments. *Pratyakshanubhava* (a direct personal experience) cannot be cut by *kutarka* (wrong reasoning).

Chapter 5.

Yukti (usage) of dhyana, based on 'Vignana Bhairav'.

The Shastras have two *vidhaa* (forms).

1. The ancient legacy of traditional knowledge that has been handed down in an unbroken *paramparaa* (knowledge given from Guru to disciple in an unbroken line), an *asmaryamaana kartrika* (a natural, effortless bhakti that does not have to be remembered to be done) which is free of the faults of *bhrama* (false understanding), *pramaada* (lapse of memory), *vipralipsaa* (when personal opinion influences the interpretation of the facts), *karnaapaatava* (misrepresenting with a desire to please), and other *dosha* (faults). This vidha is *apaurushe`ya* (not from any human source). It is the Vedas.
2. The *saadhana-pradhaana* (dominated by methods) for obtaining the Ishwara through *mantra* (groups of words with subtle power), *yantra* (diagrams with spiritual significance), *tantraatmaka* (structured) etc. This is a Guru-parampara, *anushthaana-pradhaana* (predominantly ritualistic), and *anubhava-janaka* (giving a direct personal experience). These are different methods of *upaasanaa-yoga* (attaching a person to the Ishwara through loving worship) that is filled with *kalaa-kalaapa* (artistry of different kinds).

There are many books on the second vidha, like Brahmayamal, Vishnuyamal, Rudrayamal, etc. They are voluminous works and can generally be understood only with guidance from a Guru. These, too, are of two kinds.

1. The ones that describe the Ishwara as the *tat-pada* (the Ishwara as separate), and affirming His *upaasanaa* (loving worship).

2. Those that describe the Ishwara as the *tvam-pada* (the non-dual Atma, our 'I'), showing the *poornataa* (wholeness; being whole) of the Atma; and give the poornata of *adviteeyataa* (the non-dual Atma that is the Brahman and the substratum of all that exists).

The first kind includes the Pancha Ratna, and the second kind includes the philosophy of the Kashmiri Shaivas (worshippers of the Brahman in the form of Shiva). Both have to understand the compatibility of the *jagata-jeeva* (the interactive world – the Atma attached to a body; an individual).

From the viewpoint of *bhagavata-advaita* (the non-dual form of Bhagwan) too, the entire moving-unmoving, sensate-insensate world is *bhagavat-svaroopaa* (the essence, or form, of Bhagwan). The splendor and the manifestation of the Atma that is Shiva is His *vilaasa* (pleasure; sport). Since everything is the vilas of Bhagwan – or Shiva – any method of *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) can result in the manifestation of Bhagwan's Shakti – the divine power of Bhagwan, or the Atma-Shakti.

The Kashmiri Shaivas have gathered the quintessence of Rudrayamal and created the Vignan Bharav. There is no doubt that this work is extremely old. To some extent it revolves round the philosophy of Khemraj, who was the Acharya (Teacher) of the Maha Maheshwara Sampradaya (sect). There is another commentary on this work, called Vignan Kaumudi, written by Pundit Anand Bhatt. It was published in 1975 at the behest of the Maharaja of Kashmir. It is based on this book that this simple method of *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) is being placed before you. It is my conviction that the easy and simple methods given will be useful for any person in search of the path of *shaanti* (inner tranquility).

Some examples are given below:

What is the difference between an ordinary person and a Yogi?

All sentient beings, from Sadashiva to the smallest moth have *samve'danaa* (awareness) about sense objects. *Che'tana* (consciousness) is the *graahaka* (the one who absorbs). It is the *vishayee* (the one who enjoys the objects of the senses). This is an experience that is common to all sentient beings. That being the case, what is special about Yogis?

It is only that they remain vigilant about relationships. They are always focused on the thought, 'I am the *prakaashaka* (source of illumination) *saakshee* (witness)'. They never forget this, so they do not merge with the objects of the world. They identify only with their Atma, and nothing except the Atma; not even their own mind and body.

Graahyagraahakasamvittih saamaanyaa sarvade`hinaam,
yoginaam tu vishe`shoyam sambandhe`saavadhaanataa.

How is *kaivalya* (a state where only the awareness of the Self exists) achieved?

Bhairavji says, '*Kalyaani* (fortunate lady), listen carefully. I will tell you the *shre`shtha saadhana* (highest method) that is obtained by the *gnaana-sampradaaya* (the traditional of Gnan that is handed down from Guru to disciple in a direct succession). The state of Kaivalya arises by merely keeping the pupils of the eye unmoving. When you forget the *jagata* (interactive world) of *bhe`da-abhe`da* (duality - non-duality) you get an *antardrishti* (inner vision). Then, only the effulgence of pure consciousness remains. The *chitta* (mental inclination) becomes *e`kaagra* (single pointed).'

Sampradaayamimam bhadre`shrunu samyagvadaamyaham,
kaivalyam jaayate`sadyo ne`trayoh stabdhamaatravayoh.

Both these shlokas are given in Shri Abhinav Gupta Acharya's book, Pratyabhignavivarti Vimarshini. The book also contains the name of Vignan Bhairav. In this context, the meaning of the word *bhairava* is a completely full state. This is *vignaana* (acquired Gnan). In vignan there is no scope for *kshanikataa* (anything temporary). Shakti-Shaktiman (power – the one who has power) is not separate. This is the Advaita Shiva (non-dual form of Shiva).

Not doing any *chintana* (meditation) gives rise to an *aave`sha* (emotional upsurge) of *shaambhava* (when the eyes are half shut and half open; a state where the person is aware of both the physical world and the divine world). Doing chintan that is free of thoughts or words creates a *shaakta avasthaa* (a state of Shakti). When semi-dhyana is done by imagining the *uchchaarana* (uttering), *dhyana* (meditation), *sthaana* (place) etc the upsurge of emotion is very small.

A few sadhans are given below as examples for the rising of the *poorna-avasthaa* (a state of wholeness).

Praanaayaama (breath control) is a part of the life of every human being. Pranayama is *baahya* (external) as well as *aantara* (internal). A person benefits by just the *bodha* (comprehensive understanding) of the pranayama being *sahaja* (natural; not forced). Pranayama is not to be done with an effort; it is to be observed. It never stops, whether a person is walking, standing, awake, or asleep. It continues unbroken while he eats, drinks, works, rests, or during any other activity.

Don't do prayanama; understand it, and observe it. Pranayam continues without a person needing to make any special effort. It is *svatah-siddha* (self-established). Be alert and observe your breathing. All beings breathe in and out, whether they are birds, animals, or humans. They do pranayama naturally as they come and go, without stopping even when they are in a state of *bhoga* (sensual pleasure).

A human being is not the *kartaa* (conscious doer) of pranayama. Look at this from a viewpoint of bodha.

1. *Svachchanda praana* (uncontrolled breath) comes out automatically from the *hridaya kamala* (the lotus of the heart). This is *re`chaka* (exhaling).
2. After coming out, the movement of the wind is up to a distance of twelve fingers from the nose. Pay attention to the *anga* (part of the body) touched by the breath as it moves from the heart to the nose. This touching of the anga is a kind of *pooraka* (inhaling; filling up).
3. *Apaana* (a wind, like the prana) enters from outside without a person needing to make any conscious effort. In this movement the breath touches different angas in the body. This touch is another kind of poorak.
4. The apana dissolves when it reaches the hriday. Before the movement of the praana begins again, there is a self-established state of *kumbhaka* (when the breath is still). This is how the *praana-vaayu* (the wind called praana) does pranayama continuously, as it comes out and goes into the

body. In this, the person does not have to do anything; he just has to be alert, and observe the movements of the winds.

Apana, just like the praana, is busy in the movements of exhaling and inhaling.

1. When praana merges into the space outside, and until the apana rises up to enter the nose again, it is a state of pooraka.
2. When the apana is at a distance of twelve fingers from the nose it begins to be perceived as a substance. This is called *bahi-pooraka* (external poorak).
3. When the apana remains outside the body it is as though there is a completed *ghata* (pot of clay) inside clay. This state is called kumbhak.
4. Without rising fully when apana begins to go inwards again, that is the *baahya re`chaka* (external exhalation).

This is how the *poraana-pooraka* (filled with the praana vayu) and the *apaana-pooraka* (filled with the apana vayu) are two forms of which eight pranayams continue naturally. The *hridaya* (heart), *kantha* (throat), *taalu* (roof of the cave of the mouth), *lalaata* (forehead), *randhra* (subtle opening on the crown of the head), etc are the higher locations that the praana vaayu passes through.

The opening and folding of the *mukha* (mouth; opening) of the lotus of the heart are due to the apana vaayu. Kumbhaka (when the breath remains unmoving) is both *baahya* (outside the body) and *aantara* (inside the body). A position of utter peace is established in both; neither has scope for any kind of sorrow. The fact is, the *baahya-aakaasha* (space outside the body) and the *aantara-aakaasha* (the space inside the body) seem to be separate because of the *upaadhi* (superimposition connected to something; attribute) of the *de`ha* (gross physical form).

The *avakaasha* (space) is the *advaya* (non-dual; one) form of the *chid-aakaasha* (the consciousness that pervades the space inside the body) that is *prakaasha-svaroop* (the form of effulgence; that, which enables a person to perceive). *Prakaasha* (light) and *vimarsha* (deliberation) are one in the ultimate reality. You yourself are the prakash, and the vimarsh is the *skakti* (power) that removes dukha.

When the praana-apana become still – either outside or inside the body – shakti neither goes out nor comes in. It becomes bright by the expansion of the kumbhak. The purport of this is that all the shaktis that the body has – the power to see, hear, think, etc – should be left where they are. They should remain in their own place. Our *svabhava* (essential nature) is *prakashavimarshaatmaka* (made of the light of consciousness that investigates) *spandata-tattva-svarupa* (the form of an essence that pulsates) *sarvaadhaara* (the substratum of all that exists). It is *nirvikalpa* (definite; without duality). The rising and subsiding of the praana and apana, the inhaling and exhaling movements of the breath, etc have no effect on our *svarupa* (essence; true form). The eyes may be open or shut, the important thing is that the mind should be focused on the goal. This reveals our *poornataa* (wholeness).

It is not necessary that the *abhivyakti* (expression; manifestation) of poornata should be only through kumbhak. The *re`chaka* (emptying) of the *vaayu-shakti* (power of the wind), or its *poorana* (filling up), the feeling of being *shaanta-daanta* (tranquil mind and body) is the feeling at the end of both. At that moment all *bhe`da* (distinctions; separateness) are quieted. When all distinctions disappear there is a state where the wholeness of our *shaanta-svabhava* (basic nature that is essentially tranquil), *naama-roopaateeta* (beyond name or form), svabhava manifests.

Focus your mind on the vayu-shakti. The power of the wind is known by movement. It is like the brilliance of lightning. The mind also has sudden spurts of power. It is like the rays of the sun spreading inside the body; the movement of the vaayu rises from the *moolaadhaara-chakra* (the center of subtle energy based at the base of the spine), and moves upwards. It moves beyond the *brahmarandhra* (the invisible opening at the crown of the head), up to the twelfth chakra, and then it subsides. The higher it rises, the more subtle it becomes. The more subtle the form of the *dhye`ya* (object of meditation), the more superior is the *dhyana* (meditation). The form of the *dhye`ya* (object of meditation) remains steady.

The *dyaataa* (one who does dhyana) experiences himself as the form of *paripoorna* (complete within himself) *paramaananda* (highest joyfulness). What is desired is to rise from a lower position to a higher. These positions are *janmaagra* (the organ of reproduction), *moola* (the anus), *kantha* (the throat),

naabhi (the naval), *hrit* (the heart), *taalu* (the roof of the cave of the mouth), *bhroomadhya* (the spot in-between the two eyebrows), *lalaata* (forehead), *brahmarandhra* (the invisible opening on the crown of the head), and *vyaapinee* (the all-pervading shakti, called the Kundaliini, or the serpent power).

These are the twelve chakras. The *anaahata dhvani* (a subtle sound) moves in these in a zigzag movement. There are twelve *svara* (vowels; notes) in these twelve chakras – *a, aa, i, ee, u, oo, e, ai, o, au, am, ah*.

A person should first meditate on them as a *chanchala* (flickering) prakash. Then he should meditate on them as a pulsating flow, and ultimately as an *ananta* (infinite), *akhanda* (uninterrupted) *jyoti* (flame; light). At the end he should let go of even this meditation. Only his own *vishvaroopa* (form that is the whole world) remains. The *mana* (emotional mind) becomes *nirvikalpa* (free of doubts or dualities). It is established firmly in the whole of space, pervading everything.

Give your attention to the *vishaya* (objects of the senses). The *indriya* (senses) glimmer like a peacock feather of mixed hues. They accept the *rasa* (sweetness) of the form and the beauty of objects, and submit the quintessence to the mind. They are *tanmaatras* (subtle forms of matter), and therefore, they have no form or color. The *vishaya* that are seen through the *indriyas* are also forms of *tanmatras*, and are also *avyakta* (not perceived by the senses) and *shoonya* (empty; a vacuum). The *indriyas* are *shoonya* and so are the *vishayas*.

Pay attention to this. You, yourself, are the *nish-prapancha gnaana svaroopa* (the essence that is Gnan, free of all worldly considerations). There is no *poornataa* (wholeness) beyond your own *poornata*. You have now become one with the Param-Atma.

This is not just a matter about the sense objects and the senses. You can do *chintana* (give deep thought) about any place. You can meditate on any chakra, from the *janmaagra* (center of reproduction) to the *vyaapini* (the subtle energy called Kundalini or serpent power). Look at it first, and then let go of it. Let the *vyakta* (manifest; perceived by the senses) become merged in the *avyakta*, whether it is within the body or outside it; on a wall, or inside four

walls, in some container, in your own student, or anywhere – with or without *krama* (a serial order). Let the *smriti* (memory), *kalpanaa* (imagination), etc, that are forms of *vritti* (mental inclinations) sink into the effulgence and the supreme space of *vimarsha* (deliberation). You yourself are the Parameshwara.

Look at the *sira* (head).

In Sanskrit, the *khopadee* (head) is called *kapaala*. In the language of Tantra (rites and systems), 'k' means the *paraa-shakti* (the power behind the effect), and *paala* means Shiva. The swarup of Shiva is effulgence, and the swarup of Shakti is *vimarsh*.

Establish your *mana* well in your *khopadi*. Meditate on the form of a combination of effulgence and deliberation. Let the eyes be shut and the *mana* be placed close to the *Brahmarandhra*, firmly ensconced in an extremely bright radiance. The *kapaala* is the *sthaana* (place; location) and *vimarsh* is the *vritti*, and the *prakash* is the *vishay* of *dhyana*.

Samadhi is achieved by *dhaaranaa* (focusing the mind) on the *sthana*, *dhyana* through an unbroken *chintan*, and the oneness of the *vishays*. Closing the eyes means not having *bhe`da drishti* (not seeing things as separate). It is the *prakash* and *unme`sha* (the first rising of a resolve) that manifests as this entire world. You are to experience your own self as being the form of the *laksha* (goal).

Look at your *hridaya* (heart).

The *hridaya* is situated above the stomach and below the chest. This is also where the *sushumnaa naadi* (the channel of subtle energy called *Sushumna*) is. It is like a subtle fibre that comes out of the stem of a lotus stalk. Meditate on this, and see the *chidaakaasha* (the space near the heart that is pure consciousness) in it. This *chidakasha* is absolutely empty of the *prapancha* (outside world). The *praana-shakti* (power of the life-giving air called the *praana*) oozes out automatically. *Prakash* rises by just deliberating in this manner.

Shut all four doors.

The part of the body above the neck is *gnaana-pradhaana* (dominated by knowledge). It has four kinds of *chhidra* (openings) – the *mukha* (mouth), *naasikaa* (nostrils), *ne`tra* (eyes), and *karna* (ears). After learning the proper method from your Guru, you should close these openings using the fingers of both hands. Visualise a spot in the invisible opening of the *bhroogranthi* (the spot in-between the eyebrows). As your concentration strengthens you will become established in the *samvidgagana* (inner space that is pure awareness).

Use the *ne`tra-jyoti* (the light behind the eyes).

There is a *jyoti* (light) in your eyes. A straight line is formed from the eyes. Imagine two more straight lines that lead from the eyes to a point between your eyebrows, forming a triangle. You will see there is a *rashmi-bindu* (a brilliant dot) of both your eyes inside this triangle. It looks like a *tilaka* (an auspicious mark, long in shape, smeared on the forehead) made of *sookshma agni* (subtle fire). Dhyana of this tilak can be done in the *hriday*, or above the *brahmarandhra* (the subtle opening on the crown of the head), at the end of the *vyaapinee* (the all-pervading Kundalini or Serpent power). When all dualities have gone, and you are in a state of *laya* (immersed in pure consciousness) you will experience yourself as *jyoti-svaroop* (the form of effulgence).

Listen to the Anahat Naad.

There is a subtle sound that is not created in the throat or mouth. It is not possible to hear this in the normal way. It flows like a stream of running water. The flow of this sound is never interrupted; it can be heard in the whole body and also outside the body. Lose yourself completely in this *naada-brahma* (the audible form of the Brahman). In the *shithilataa* (weakened state) of your Aham (subtle pride of individuality) you will experience yourself to be the Parabrahman. When your chitta is completely focused on this unbroken Anahata Naad the swarup of the *paramaakaasha* (supreme space) will manifest.

Utter the Pranav.

The *pranava* (a-u-m) is of many kinds. In the Vedas it is *aum*. For the Shaivas it is *hum*. For the Shaktas it is *ain*, *hreem*, *kleem*, *shree*, etc. The pronunciation

can be *hrasva* (short, as in ‘cup’) or *deergha* (enlongated, as in coop), or *pluta* (enlongated; stretched). The pronunciation should be in keeping with the *sampradaaya* (tradition of the sect) you belong to.

The pranav should be uttered thrice. The fourth should be pluta. There are no objects in the consciousness. It is a simple awareness of pure existence. When it reaches completion, it should rest in the *shaanta aatma-jyoti* (the tranquil effulgence of the Atma). In this state, the ‘a’ ‘u’ and ‘m’ – or the form of the bindu (dot on the word aum as written in the Nagari script, the unuttered part of aum) is not the *prame`ya* (that, which is established); the only prameys is the *shoonya shakti* (the power that has no substance).

The separate letters depict the separate states of the Brahman, but the form of the *ardha-maatra* (unspoken half-syllable indicated by the bindu in Om) is a *vishraama sthiti* (state of repose) that gives the *bodha* (incandiscent understanding) of the Brahman. In that state, the only thing that exists is the Parameshwara, who is the storehouse of all existence, is *paripoorna* (whole within Himself), and is *samvinmaya* (filled with awareess). That is the one and only unbroken, infinite *dhaama* (purifying place).

Take the support of any *akshara* (letter).

Make any akshar your *aalambana* (support) – *a*, *k*, *cha*, etc. What is the swarup of that akshar in the desire to utter it? What is at the end of the *uchchaarana* (uttering)? The fact is it is *shoonya* (empty; a vacuum) at the beginning and shoonya at the end. Therefore, it is shoonya even during the period of your uttering it. When you give your attention to this, the feeling of being the *pramaata* (the consciousness that establishes the existence of anything, through being aware of it) who is connected to your physical form, will dissolve. You will experience yourself to be the Brahman that is indicated by shoonya.

The support of *vaadya-dvani* (sound made by musical instruments).

There are many kinds of *vaadya* (musical instruments) – *shata-tantri* (with a hundred strings), *parivaadinee* (resounding, like drums), *tumba veenaa* (a long stringed instrument moulded with a dried pumpkin at one end), etc. Flat and sharp notes are brought out from them. The notes are many; their loudness is

one. Connect the *vritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts) that rise successively to the sounds of these instruments. Your focus will be single-pointed while the sound continues.

This is *saalambana dhyana* – dhyana done with a support. When the sound dies down at the end, sit in a *nir-aalambana* (without support) *sthati* (state). This will be a *sthati* in the *parama chidaakaasha* (supreme inner space that is the consciousness). This is the desired state of an unwavering mind.

Become *antar-mukha* (with the mind turned inwards).

One by one, cross over the *bhoomikaa* (introductory states) of ‘a’ in the *naabhi* (naval), ‘u’ in the *hridaya* (heart), ‘m’ in the *mukha* (mouth), the *bindu* (dot) in the *bhroomadhya* (point between the eyebrows), *ardhachandra* (half-moon above the word ‘aum’ in the Nagari script) in the *lalaata* (brow), the *nirodhini* (that, which blocks) above that, the *naad* (sound) in the *sira* (head), the *naad-anta* (end of the sound) in the Brahmarandhra, the shakti in the *tvachaa* (skin), the *vyaapinee* (all-perading power) in the *shikhaa-moola* (the roots of the top-knot of hair), the *samanaa* (the wind called samana) in the *shikhaa* (summit of the head), and the *unmana* (mental disturbance) in the *shikhaanta* (end of the tuft of hair on the crown of the head). Then immerse yourself in the supreme Shiva who is the stainless form of space. You, yourself, are Shiva.

Look inside your *de`ha* (body).

What is inside this gross physical form of yours? There is *avakaasha* (space) on all sides. Let go of the *krama-bhaavanaa* (the serial order of what comes first and what comes after). Look simultaneously. Your *shareera* (body) will disappear into the *akaasha* (space). No *vikaara* (mental distortion) of the *mana* (emotional mind) will remain.

Since there will be no perception of the deha, only the akasha will remain. Awareness will remain, because you are the swarup of *che`tana* (consciousness). The chetan and the akasha – the consciousness and space – will merge, and become one. You are the *chidaakaasha bhraman* (the Brahman that is pure consciousness and indivisible space)!

The *bhaavanaa* (feeling) of *shoonyataa* (emptiness).

The *pramaataa* (one who establishes) sits behind everyone, but has no form on which a person can meditate. Below everything in the *bahiranga de'sha* (space outside the body) is the *prame'ya* (that, which is established; the interactive world). This, too, is *svaroopaa shoonya* (without form) in the *abhaava* (absence) of it *adhikarana* (the substratum that is the non-dual Brahman). That means the outer world is a relative truth that is superimposed on the substratum that is the Brahman.

The *pramaana* (proof; that, which is established) is in-between the the *hridaya*, meaning, the *pramata* and the *prameya*.

Then, what are you?

Be still and see. The *pramata* is *nirvikalpa* (having no alternative); the *prameya* is *nirvikalpa*, and *pramana* is also *nirvikalpa*, and you are *nirvikalpa* as well. It is this *deha* of yours that creates the *bhe'da* (separateness) of the *graahya-graahaka* (that, which is absorbed - the one who absorbs). Even if it is for a fleeting moment, see it in the form of *shoonya*. You yourself are *nirvikalpa*.

If you cannot retain this feeling in your meditation, think about the *upaaya* (method of achieving what you want).

What is the *upaya*? You know that every grain of this body of yours, made of flesh and bones, is pervaded by space. *Akasha* is *anugata* (connected to) in everything. Remove everything from your mental vision; let only space remain. Then, the *bhavana* will manifest.

What is the *vibhaajaka* (separating line) of the *deha*?

Only skin covers the *deha*. Just as walls separate the inside of a house from the space outside, the skin demarcates the inside of the body from the space outside the body. There is nothing except the *akasha* inside the skin.

By doing *dhyana* on this, the *dhya'ya* (object of meditation) will disappear. The *vyaapakataa* (all-ervading quality) of the *svaroopaa* (essence; true form) will become evident. You will no longer feel that you are the *pramata* seated in a *deha*.

The *Hridaya-kamal* (lotus of the heart).

Where the prana and the apana meet, the pristine akasha shines in the lotus of the heart. The *vishva* (world) is seen when the hridaya-kamal opens, and vanishes when it closes. In-between the two is the *chinmaatra pramaataa* (the consciousness that establishes).

Let go of the opening and closing of the hriday-kamal, and remain as the form of consciousness. You will see that it is you who is doing the *leelaa* (sport; frolic) of *udaya-vilaya* (rising up – dissolving).

See only the *lakshya* (goal; target).

Do not hold on to the rules of *sthaana* (place), *vastu* (object), and *kaala* (time). See the *che`tanyade`va* (divine consciousness) in even a single follicle of the body. In it you will find every *avasthaa* (state) from the janmagraha to the vyapinee. Let your mana be focused there, and let it lose itself there. The awareness of the *para-tattva* (the essence that is beyond this world) will be attained there.

Your *vimarsha* (deliberation) and the Paramatma's *prakaasha* (effulgence); you will actually see the effulgence that is the form of your vimarsh. Your thoughts will lessen steadily. No matter when, where, or how you focus your mana, you will see something different – and that amazing object will be yours!

Turn the deha to *bhasma* (ashes).

'Aum ra ksha ra ya aum tanum daahayaami namah.' Utter this mantra, and then do dhyana. Think, 'Rudra (Bhagwan Shiva's destroying form), who is the *kaalaagni* (fire of Dissolution) is emerging from the big toe of my right foot and burning up this body. This body is burning like rasi.' Your awareness of the existence of your body will quieten.

You can also meditate on the burning of the whole world in the same way. This meditation, of the burning of the body or the world, can only be done if your mind is *e`kaagra* (single-pointed). Only you will remain in the form of the *parama purusha* (supreme being).

Chintana (meditation) of the *sookshma tattva* (subtle element).

The subtle elements are present in our body. They are not only within the body, they are outside as well. You can meditate on them anywhere.

Prakriti (Nature; the Ishwara's power of Creation), *mahat-tattva* (the supreme essence before it divides into the five elements), *ahankaara* (the subtle pride of individuality), *prithivee* (the earth), etc; then their *vikaara* (distortions), *jadataa* (being inert), *buddhi* (the intellect), *ahambhaavanaa* (feeling of 'I'), the differences of flesh, blood, mucus etc are also present.

Meditate on this *kaarya-varga* (group that is the effect, the objects of the world; not the cause) clearly, and then merge them into the *kaarana-dashaa* (the state that is the cause) as though they – all the effects – are dead.

When you continue to meditate on them, ultimately, the *parama-chiti* (highest realization) will manifest ultimately.

Chintan of the prana.

First, do the chintan of the *sthoola-roopa* (gross form) of the *praana-shakti* (the power of the prana). Then, let it gradually become *sookshma* (subtle). See the subtleness from the janmagra to the vyapini and become *shaanta* (still; at peace) in your hriday. This shanti is the place where the supremely independent Parameshwara manifests.

Chintan on the six *adhvaa* (adhva is a technical term for explaining the principle of non-duality when doing meditation).

There are six divisions of the adhva.

1. *Varna* (letters).
2. *Mantra* (a group of words that contain subtle power).
3. *Pada* (a sentence or poem).
4. *Kalaa* (artistic skill).
5. *Tattva* (essence).
6. *Bhuvana* (field of experience).

The first two adhvas are present in the next two adhvas, in a *vyaapaka* (all-pervading) form. The second two adhvas are *antarhita* (amidst) the first two in a permeating form. The purport of this is that everything is in everything.

Now, do the *dhyanaanvaya* (impose this feeling on your mind). The *chidaanandaghana* (dense consciousness and joyfulness) Parameshwara is a *svatantra* (self-ruled) *svaraata* (supreme Monarch). Through His infinite

power, He draws this infinite world on the blank wall of the form of His essence, using His influence from shoonya up to the earth. This Creation is nothing but the Parameshwara, but it is perceived as being more substantial than Him!

In this, the varna, mantra, and pada are included in the *graahaka-bhaaga* (the portion that perceives and absorbs), because they are more substantial. They come in the *krama* (serial order) of *para* (beyond), *sookshma* (subtle), and *sthoola* (gross).

The *graahya-bhaaga* (the portion that is perceived and absorbed) is *vaachya* (can be described). Kala, Tattva and bhuvan are the three parts of this portion. They are also in the krama of para, sookshma, and sthoola.

The varna is the *saara* (quintessence) of the *abhe`da-vimarsha* (deliberation on oneness). This turns into mantras through a trace of the sthoola. Mantras have some deliberation about *bhe`da-abhe`dha* (separateness-oneness), and have the form of *naada* (sound). They turn into a gross form and become sentences. They are the *avagamaka* (lower form) of the deliberation of bheda.

In exactly the same way, the *kalaa-shakti* (artistic power or creativity) of the Paramatma – that is in the form of speech – becomes more specific and becomes the *bhuvana-roopa* (the form of the world that is experienced).

Actually, there is no *krama* (serial order) in the pulsation of the Parameshwara's shakti. Even so, it also shows an order, like a city seen in a mirror. Even in the krama the first *pada-padaartha* (the sentence and its meaning) pervade the next, like clay in a clay pot. The following pervades the earlier in the form of shakti, the way a tree is present in the seed.

Thus, everything is the *sarvaatmaa* (the Atma of everything). The *anaashrita tattva* (the Tattva that does not depend on any other), the *niraalambana tattva* (the tattva that requires no other support), or the *niruttara tattva* (the highest Tattva) up to the *pramaataa* (the consciousness in the individual that grasps and establishes) pervades everything.

If you think on these lines, every pramata or *bhaava* (feeling) is the form of the Parameshwara, because it is He who is the swarup of the form of the expansion of the six adhvas that are the form of his divine power. From the

letter 'a' (the first letter) to 'ha' (the last letter of the Nagari script) all the varnas and all the mantras and padas made of these varnas are the separate *ahamtaa* (the subtle pride of individuality), is the Parameshwara who reposes in them.

Please give your attention to this: this entire world is the form of the *shadadhvaa* (six adhvas). Merge the gross into the subtle, and the subtle into the *chinmaatra-aatma-bodha-svaroopaa* (the essence that is the conscious, enlightened Atma). When you do dhyana in this manner, your true form – that is the Paramatma – will manifest.

Chintan of the *shoonya* (emptiness).

This entire world is a shoonya that has no name or form. So is the mana. You are the *adhishtana* (substratum) of the shoonya.

See all objects without the wall (substratum) on which they are superimposed. This is your *vishraama-sthana* (place of resting). You, yourself, are the Brahman.

Look at the *shoonya dishaa* (the empty directions). Don't see trees, mountains, walls or anything. When you remain without the support of the *chitta-vritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts) you will see that you are the *mahaa-prakaasha* (great effulgence).

When you are aware of two *padaartha* (substances; objects), two *bhaava* (feelings), or two *pada* (sentences), see the shoonya that separates them. When your *vritti* (mental inclination) becomes single-pointed, let go of both simultaneously. You, yourself, are present in the form of the *parama-dhaama* (the highest holy place).

See the unseen.

Keep your consciousness focused on some object like the three-eyed Shankar Bhagwan, or four-armed Vishnu Bhagwan, who you cannot see with your physical eyes. Don't think about any object that you have seen. Once you have let go of everything before the *dhyeya* (object of meditation), including the dhyeya, you will find that the *chettanaa* (consciousness) has no *svaroopaa* (form). There is only the *pramaataa* (the individual consciousness that

establishes the existence of objects) in the visible dhyeya and the earlier state, and the pramata is the one who investigates. That is your *chinmaatra svaroop*a (the form that is pure consciousness). It is in this state that the Atma-Parameshwara manifests.

Take a look at your *de`ha* (gross physical form). The whole body – from the feet to the hair – is *chinmaya* (filled with consciousness). Every cell and follicle of the body has consciousness. The entire world is filled with consciousness. Meditate on this separately or simultaneously. Allow a miracle of your *chit-shakti* (power of consciousness) to fill your *nirvikalpa mana* (emotional mind that has no options in it). It is the miracle of your *chitta* (mental inclinations; thoughts) everywhere – outside and inside; earlier and later. The *prakaashamaana* (effulgent) is not separate from the *prakaasha* (effulgence). Had it been separate its characteristic of being radiant could not be established. It is light that shines. It is the pramata that becomes the *prame`ya* (that, which is established). It is you who is seen in all forms.

How can the *vignaana* (acquired Gnan) of *samatva* (equanimity of outlook) be aroused?

The praana that is drawn inside comes to rest at the very place from which it starts its outward movement. The state that prevails just before the breath starts its outward movement and the state of the praana after exhalation are both the *shaanti-sthala* (place of repose) of the praana and the apaana. The praana and the apaana do not remain separate in either state. Now, observe the lack of movement of breath. There is only shoonya. *Samadrishti* (a viewpoint of equanimity) arises from this dhyana.

You are *paramaananda* (supreme joyfulness).

Let go of the anand you get from the *vishaya* (objects of the senses). See the entire *jagata* (world) filled with your *aanandaamrita* (necture of your joyfulness). *Poornamadah poornamidam* (the Brahman is complete and so is this world, because it is a form of the Brahman, of which every part is complete). The waves of the ocean of *chidaananda* (the awareness of anand) that is your swarup, fills the whole world. Anand is there, and the jagat is there as well. You can substitute *chinmaya* (filled with consciousness) with *rasamaya* (filled with sweet emotion). See this jagat that is filled with a vast and rising

anand as the splendour of your own form, and experience yourself as paramananda.

See the magic show.

You can keep your eyes open or shut them. The magician has organized an amazing show! Gardens of *maayaa* (the Ishwara's power of illusion), a huge variety of trees, beautiful creepers, flowers of all hues, etc; and you are enjoying them all. The magician cut off his limbs and rejoined them to his body. He showed things that did not exist and made solid objects vanish. He dissolved everything into nothing, and he disappeared! As you enjoyed all this, you reached a state of non-duality that was free of sense-objects. Remain in this state for a little while.

The touch of prana.

Close all the openings of the sense organs, both the higher and the lower ones. Your *praana-shakti* (the power of your breath) moves slowly from the lower to the higher, and then returns to the lower. Enjoy its slow movement. Your prana-shakti rises from one point to another, and descends again. The movement is slow, as though an ant is moving inside the body. Take pleasure in the touch of your prana-shakti.

Mentally compress the *praana-vaayu* (the wind called prana) and make it still. Or else, expand it and let it go. Or else, keep it still anywhere – inside or outside the body. Your Atma-shakti will become more radiant.

Sukha-saadrishya (the proximity of sukha).

Are you a *grihastha* (married householder)? Do you think about the sukha of your wife's embrace? Sukha is neither in a woman nor in a man. It is in the incorporating of the *aananda-shakti* (the power of anand).

Shift your attention from the duality of man-woman, and think about the sukha of *aatma-maatra-nishthaa* (the faith that nothing exists but the Atma). There was a *kaarana* (reason; cause) for the manifestation of sukha in duality; it was not real sukha. Our swarup is *sukha-maatra* (pure sukha); make this the subject of your mental focus. Let that anand pulsate in the *aatma-sthaana* (place that is the Atma; in your heart) every moment, without there being any

sense object involved. This will make you forget the difference between the inner and the outer world. Your *aatmaananda* (anand of your Atma) will become stable. The Brihadaranyak Upanishad has a description of the sukha of the union of a husband and wife. This is merely an example; it is not a *vidhaana* (ordained duty).

It is like a beggar getting huge wealth with no strings attached. It is like the joy a person feels when he meets his lover, son, or dear friend after a long time. Anand does not come from anywhere else; you yourself are the *shaantaananda* (the happiness that is deep peace). This anand gushes out on special occasions. There is no need for meeting someone, or parting from someone, for anand to arise. Let your anand well up and see your own *vaibhava* (splendour), and become *shaanta* (still; at peace).

Experience the deep satisfaction that a hungry man feels when he gets a good meal, a thirsty man when he gets a cool drink of refreshing water, the delight of tasting nectar with every morsal of food and every sip you take. You are being nourished and satisfied as your hunger abates. There is *ullaasa* (rapture), there is *rasa* (sweet emotion), and there is anand.

There is the rapture of *sparsha-vimarsha* (investigating touch), the *rasa* of *sne`haardrataa* (affection as sweet as a juicy fruit), and the investigation of our *che`tana* (conscious) Aham (the subtle pride of individuality) is Paramananda. You are the *raso vai sah* (the Brahman that is full of eternal sweetness and bliss).

Have you every experienced the magical joy of sweet music, a tender touch, or exquisite beauty? If you have ever had the direct personal experience of unparalleled sukha, superimpose it on your mana in the form of an anand that is free of *shabda-sparsha-roopa* (sound-touch-appearance), and become engrossed in it. Your dormant shakti will awaken. You will experience yourself as the Brahman, not subject to anyone or anything.

When the vrittis of *priya* (pleasurable), *moda* (delight), *pramode* (extreme happiness) etc rise up, allow them to be felt, but don't allow them to create *kshobha* (agitation) in your heart. Do dhyana that you are Shiva, who is pure consciousness. You are the supreme anand who gives existence and life to the most outstanding beauty and sweetness. That anand is your own anand. It is

not arisen from the sight or experience of any object of the senses. Keep this knowledge and anand stable in your mana. The curtain of nescience that hides your swarup will be rent asunder.

See the *sandhi* (point of connection).

The vrittis are immersed in the body when you go to sleep. You cease to see the outside world. There is a moment that connects the waking state from the deep sleep state. In that moment, the sense objects of the outside world are not observed, but the vritti is not covered by the darkness of *tamas* (the tendency that dulls the mind). Arrest your *samvit* (awareness) in that state.

This state that comes between the dense darkness of the deep sleep state and the effulgence of the awareness of the world is a direct personal experience. It is a space in which the awareness of anand rises. You will experience yourself as the form of unalloyed anand.

Baahyaakaasha (the space outside the body).

Brightness is spreading in space. This is pure effulgence. It is not connected to the brightness of the sun, moon, a lamp, or any other source of light. Fix your sight on this light, whether it is inside or outside the room, and look at it without blinking. The space that is illuminated is the subject of your *dhaaranana* (holding the mind on an image). When the vision begins to slacken focus your mind on it again. This is *dhyaana* (meditation). When you see only effulgence and nothing else, that is Samadhi.

See the whole world as the form of pure consciousness, with your *gnaana-drishti* (the vision of Gnan). Let go of the effulgence; only the limpid space remains. This is not separate from your own essence, which is pure consciousness. Only you exist.

Alpaashraya (a nominal support).

Sit on a soft *asana* (mat). Lift up your arms and legs so that only your bottom touches the asana. A shakti will race through your body. This will awaken the dormant *che'tanaa* (consciousness) in you. You will need to be alert to keep your arms and feet suspended in the air. Tamo guna (the tendency that dulls the mind) will be destroyed.

Keep your body unmoving; Rajo guna (the tendency that creates restlessness) will be destroyed.

Your *saattvik buddhi* (the intellect filled with Sattva guna that gives peace and purity) will awaken. It will absorb the *aatma-pratibimba* (the reflection of the Atma). It will merge completely with the Atma.

In the *kukshi* (belly).

Sit comfortably on an asana. A triangular space will be observed between your two arms and the body. Focus your mana on that space. Your mana will cease to be restless. It will become tranquil. It will merge into the *avakaasha* (space) and become *poorna* (whole; complete in itself). This will be the place where the entire *chit-shakti* (power of consciousness) appears.

Sthoolaalambana (a gross support).

Whether it is your body or a pot, keep your eyes fixed on it. Your eyelids should neither rise nor fall. The target should remain within. The external support will vanish. Your mana will quickly become *nir-aadhaara* (without any support) and *bhe`da-rahita* (without separate objects). It will become Shiva.

Uchchaarana (uttering; pronouncing).

Keep your mouth open with the tongue inside, suspended in mid-air, so it touches neither the bottom nor the roof of the cave of the mouth. Gather up your consciousness fully to that spot. Utter the letter 'h' without giving it a form. Utter 'h' and breathe in and 'sa' as you breathe out; but 'sa' cannot be uttered in this position. Fix your vision mentally on the point between the eyebrows. Your mana will be quiet. It will merge into the *pramaataa* (the consciousness that establishes) that illuminates it.

The *aalambana* (support) of the asana.

You can sit or lie down on any asana – it can be a deer-skin, a silk or cotton mat, a velvet rug, or duvet or coverlet. Any of these will do. Feel the *sukha* (comfort; pleasure) of its touch. Hold on mentally only to the *sukha* and let go of its connection to the item you are sitting on. Mentally, lift up your body. Everything is below, you are above. If you wish, you can leave your body below as well. See yourself as being *nir-aadhaara* (without any support). All the

vaasanaa (avid desires) you have in your heart will go. You will be established in your swarup.

In *chanchalataa* (restlessness).

You may be swinging on a swing or riding an elephant, horse, or car. It may be that you are rocking your body or swaying as you sit at home. Pay attention to the fact that external movements cannot shake your *che`tanaa* (consciousness). Your *maanasa* (pertaining to the mind; emotional state) is established in a state of absolute tranquility. It is unmoving; effulgent. Your mana is not *chanchala* (restless). Space is the support of movement. Space is not separate from your swarup, which is consciousness and joyfulness – chit and anand. There is only *divyataa* (divine existence).

Keep your body absolutely still. Look steadily at the sky without blinking. You will experience an *aave`sha* (overpowering experience) of the feeling that you are the *paripoorna* (complete in Himself) Parameshwara.

The entire space, which the form of darkness, is immersed in your hriday and brahmarandhra, also called your *linga shareera* (physical form). The word 'ling' is an indication of being immersed. Become free of all fear, and see your *sarva-samhaaraka* (all-destroying), *sarva-bhaava-paripoorna* (feeling of being all beings and complete), *kaala-roopa* (the form of Time) in the space within you. You will see the blue hue of darkness and become supreme effulgence.

With the method of Vedanta.

There is the *vishuddha sattva-pradhaana maayaa* (the power of illusion, Maya, that is dominated by the pure, lofty tendency of Sattvaguna), and there is the *malina sattva-pradhaana avidyaa* (the nescience dominated by impurity). The Ishwara is the *aashraya* (refuge) of the *chidaatmaa* (the conscious Atma) in which Maya is reflected. The feeling, 'I know everything, I do everything' abides, and this Ishwara is one.

The chidatma in which avidya is reflected is the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual). The jeeva also believes, 'I am the karta who does things; I am the bhokta who experiences pleasure and suffering'. Jeevas are many, because every being – human, animal, bird, etc – is a jeeva. The jeeva identifies with the physical form and develops the feeling of being happy, sad, hungry,

thirsty, etc. His subtle ego is superimposed on his swarup. This is called *taijas*. The *kaarana shareera* (the subtle body – antahkarana – that is the cause of rebirth) is *avidyaa* (nescience; identification with the body). The jeeva that has avidya is the *praagna*.

In the *samashti* (all of creation) the word *hiranyagarbha* is used in place of taijas; and Ishwara in place of praagna. The *abhimaanee* (one who has the subtle pride of individuality) of the *sthoola samashti* (this gross world) is the *vaishvaanara* and the abhimani of the *vyashti* (individual) is called the vishva.

During *sushupti* (the deep sleep state) the praagna experiences the pleasure of sense objects due to avidya, before waking up, and remembers his *agnaana* (ignorance) while he slept.

The Ishwara is *sarvagna* (all-knowing), and so He does not have the *abhimaana* (pride) of having avidya, but because of the identification with the praagnas, He experiences Himself as the *sarva-kartaa* (doer of everything).

At the time of *mahaa-pralaya* (total Dissolution) the Ishwara goes into *yoga-nidraa* (a state like deep sleep where no other exists). At that time the avidya of the praagna remains immersed in the form of vasanas that are dormant. Had this not been so, how could the *kaarana shareera* (causal body) arise at the time of *mahaa-sarga* (Creation of the world), and the state of being a jeeva come into being?

This is the *srishti-laya-prakriyaa* (the process of Creation-Dissolution) of Vedanta.

Now, please give your attention to this – vishva-vaishvanara, taijas-hiranyagarbha, praagna-Ishwara, Maya-avidya, and all their *vilaasa* (sensuous pleasures) are your swarup. You are the *tureeya* (beyond the world) Bhairav-Atma. Everything is your *prakaasha* (effulgence), your vilas! You, yourself, are the Brahman.

In the Krishna-paksha (the dark fortnight).

The darkness of a Krishna-paksha night has spread on all sides. The sky is overcast with clouds. The darkness is so dense that you can't even see your own hand.

Look at this darkness for a long time with open eyes. You see the *prakaashaka* (one who illuminates) of the entire darkness, without any divisions of east, west, north and south, above and below. You are the Parameshwara.

When the darkness fades, shut your eyes. You will see the same darkness everywhere. See it with your eyes open at times, and shut at times. Your quality of being the Paramatma will manifest.

When anything obstructs the experience of any sense object, a natural *nirodha* (blocking) or an effort of resistance rises up. Take the support of this nirodh and become *antarmukha* (mentally turned inwards). Enter into the *advaya-shoonya* (the non-dual emptiness). The effulgence of the supreme consciousness of your Atma will be seen.

Only 'a'.

Utter the syllable 'a' without a *bindu* (the dot that indicates a nasal pronunciation) repeatedly. Meaning, don't say 'am' or 'ah'. The bindu is an undivided *samve'dana* (perception), and *visarga* (giving up; release) is a method of creating differences. The *a-kaara* (sound of 'a') means *chintana* (deep thought) that is *a-karana* (without any instrument) and *a-kinchita* (not even a little; nothing). Nothing at the start and nothing in the middle. This *drishti* (viewpoint; seeing) reveals the Parameshwara.

When you utter any *varna* (syllable) with visarga you see its *anta* (end; conclusion) – *kah, khak, gah*, etc. Turn your mind inwards; become antarmukha, and see your *svabhaava* (intrinsic nature). The *shoonya* (emptiness; vacuum) at the conclusion of every visarga is the svabhava. Merge your *che'tanaa* (consciousness) in it. *Brahma-sparsha* (the touch of the Brahman) occurs in the *niraashraya* (state of being without any support) *samve'dana* (perception).

See your Atma in the form of space that is undivided by the directions. You are the *chinmaatra* (pure consciousness). There is no *aashraya* (refuge; supporting factor) within and no *vishaya* (object of the senses) outside. This is the place of the experience of the *paripoorna ahamtaa* ('I' being complete; wholeness of the 'I').

A blow on the *shareera* (body).

Pierce your finger or thumb lightly with a pin. Concentrate on that spot. Focus on the awareness of the sensation of pain. The *yukti* (connection) with the pristine Gnan of the Atma will appear. This chintan can be done even when you incur any minor injury.

The *utkarsha* (excellence) of *drishti* (vision).

See with the *sookshma drishti* (subtle vision). Just as there is no separate *sattaa* (existence) in the different forms seen in a dream, the forms seen in the waking state have no separate *antahkarana* (fourfold mind composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality). Your shareer is like a wooden elephant or a clay deer. It has no antahkarana. Since you have no antahkarana how can you have any *sankalpa* (mental resolve) or *vikalpa* (doubt/alternative)? When you become established in this feeling you will go into a *nirvikalpa samaadhee* (a state of deep meditation where you are not aware of anything except your Self). You will experience the effulgence of your swarup.

Vive`kakhyaati (knowledge about discrimination).

Maya shows that, which has no existence. She cheats people by hiding that, which exists. Maya's Dharma (intrinsic nature) is to delude. The Dharma of *kalaa* (artistry) is to do something. Knowledge is the Dharma of *vidyaa* (learning; right understanding). Understand, 'None of these is my Dharma.' When you investigate your intrinsic nature in this manner, your being separate is revealed, and the *poornataa* (being complete; whole) of the Self incorporates everything into the Self.

Shaanti (inner peace).

Turn inwards and see – from where does desire arise, without your even thinking about it? No doubt it has arisen because of the agitation caused by Maya when the consciousness is without any form. The Atma is *chinmaatra* (pure consciousness); and it is *amoorta* (invisible) and *niraakaara* (without a form). In the Atma, desires and their objects are nothing but avidya. Awaken this viewpoint, and let your desires be dissolved in it as soon as they arise.

The *aakaasha* (space) is avidya. All kinds of thoughts rise up and die out in it. You are *shaanta* (at peace) before a desire rises and you are shanta again after

it leaves. Desires rise up and fade out the way you open and shut your eyes. You are free of doubts and duality – you are nirvikalpa. One agitating thought cropped up and it faded away. Then the first worry came in another form. Only one desire – or worry – follows in the form of many desires and worries. There is no *ichchaa* (desire) or *chintaa* (worry); there is only you! It is you who manifest in the forms of desires and worries, and many forms of knowledge. All this is the Atma-swarup. By meditating on these lines you will obtain Gnan about the *paramaarth*a (supreme goal).

What is the swarup of the *aham-bhaava* (feeling of being 'I'; a separate individual) before the knowledge of sense objects rises, along with a desire to obtain or avoid them?

At that stage there was no limited Aham. That is *chid-aananda* (consciousness that is unalloyed bliss). The fact is *chitta nivritti* (a mind free of all inclinations), desire, knowledge, *kriyaa* (action), etc are all shaktis of the Atma.

Therefore, this *pramaataa* (the consciousness that establishes the existence of things) is not *parichhinna* (separate) only in the earlier state; it is one and non-dual in every state. It is *sat-chit-ananda* (existence-consciousness-joy). It is *sadaa-shiva* (the eternal Shiva).

Even before desire and knowledge arise, and you experience the objects of the senses, remember that this knowledge and desire are the swarup of your Atma. After taking this decision let your chitta remain in the form of the desire and knowledge. By just doing this you will get Gnan about the Paramartha.

You would be familiar with the philosophy of *kshanik vignaana* (that the world is a temporary experience). *Ghata-gnaana* (knowledge about the pot, to indicate the body that is also made of clay) is obtained without the presence of a pot. In this, there is no Atma that is known; there is only gnan, and even this knowledge is *kshanika* (temporary).

Now, see: neither does the object have any permanent existence, nor do you. Only Gnan exists. Objects are perceived because of the *maayaa* (power of illusion) of your Atma. Apart from Gnan there is no *vishaya* (object of the senses) and no *vishayee* (the one who experiences the objects of the senses). It is a *bhrama* (false understanding) to think that the pot is the same pot. The

same illusion is created about the water in a flowing river. It seems to be the same, but is changing constantly.

You are the Sadashiva who is free of the divisions of the *gnaataa-gne`ya* (knower – that, which is known).

From an elephant to an ant, worms or insects to Sadashiva – nothing exists except the *che`tanaa* (pure consciousness). He who shines in the radiant sun is also the smallest worm. All that exists is *brahmamaya* (permeated by the Brahman). When you do the *dhaaranaa* (keeping your mind fixed on this thought) of this feeling, you will conquer the world.

In *vikaara* (mental distortions).

Vikaras rise up unbidden in the mana. Man-woman rise up in *kaama* (lust), enemies in *krodha* (anger), wealth in *lobha* (greed), loved ones in *moha* (worldly attachments), and objects of *maatsarya* (jealousy) crop up in the mind.

Very well; they come. Fix your buddhi on whichever form crops up, and keep it steadily on that object. You will become *antaramukha* (mentally turned inwards). Draw in your vrittis the way a tortoise withdraws its head and limbs. You will see that you no longer embrace the external object of the sense, because of the single-pointed focus of your mind. All external forms will blur and fade. Only pure consciousness will remain.

This whole world is like a web of fantasy. It is like a magic show, or a painting sketched on awareness. For example, if you sit on a boat that turns round and round you get the feeling that the world is revolving round you. This kind of dhyana will make you immersed in paramananda. The *graahya-graahaka* (that which is absorbed – the one who absorbs) are both the *vilaasa* (sensual pleasures) of the *samvid* (awareness).

What is the *sandhi* (meeting point) of sukha and dukha?

Don't fling your chitta into subjects of dukha. Don't establish your chitta into the subjects of sukha either. The purport of this is, don't form any opinion about being happy or sad. Don't allow the *adhyasa* (superimposition connected to something; attributes) of sukha-dukha to be superimposed on

your Atma. Just see what lies in-between the two. It is the chetan Tattva. Keep your mind on that.

Poorna-ahamtaa (the wholeness of 'I').

Give up the belief, 'I exist only in my body'. Don't think, 'I am only the conscious Atma who is the pramata.' See yourself as 'I am the swarup of all. I am the chinmatra Sada-Shiva. I always exist. I am everywhere and I am everything.' See this with a mind that is free of doubts, and from the viewpoint of pure consciousness. Do not see any other.

Many scholars have written clearly about the Atma being one and the same, in Shiva and Shakti (the supreme Atma in the male form as Shiva and female form as Shakti) as being the *vishvaatmaa* (Atma of the whole world). However, even this feeling about the Tattva is negated. In the opinion of learned scholars fear can arise only if a separate object called 'I' exists. Since no separate 'I' exists, what is there to fear?

The Buddhist philosophy does not contradict this opinion. In their opinion, if a separate 'I' is allowed to remain there will always be an 'other'. When the divisions of 'mine' and 'someone else's' remains, *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion) will definitely be present. The fact is, all *dosha* (faults) are possible because of the *aashraya* (shelter) of the separate 'I' and 'other'.

Therefore, keep your mind focused steadily on the fact that you are the Vishvatma, beyond the *vishva* (world). You are *svatantra* (not ruled by any other), you are *divya* (divine), and you are *akshara* (imperishable). Your Aham (I) is an unbroken, paripoorna Tattva that is pure consciousness. All your fears will go.

A foolish man believes himself to be alone and is afraid. A person who has acquired Gnan becomes free from fear because he believes no other exists, apart from his own Self. The fact is that all the Shastras describe Bhagwan as the form of the Atma. Only the limitations are to be given up.

The *vyaapakataa* (all-pervading quality) of Gnan.

In any object it is our knowledge and desire – our Gnan and *ichchaa* – that we are aware of, but these are not restricted to our heart only. They are *sarva-*

vyaapaka (all-pervading). From Sada-Shiva to the smallest worm and in all objects like the *ghata* (pot; a human body) and *pata* (cloth), all Gnan and ichcha are the expanse of your own Gnan-swarup. All knowledge that leads to action is universal. When you keep this thought fixed steadily in your mind you become *sarvaatmaka* (the Atma of all).

Being *saavadhaana* (watchful).

All beings, from Sada-Shiva to the smallest worm, have awareness of the feeling of *graahya-graahaka* (that, which is absorbed – the one who absorbs it). The special quality of the Yogis is that they remain watchful regarding relationships. That means, they do not attach themselves to anything. They never forget the *paramaarth*a (highest Truth) of being the one who perceives and absorbs.

The *samvit* (awareness).

Just as our *shareera* (gross physical form) has Samvit so has the shareera of every other being. Give up the *ape`ksha*a (expectation; need) of your own shareer, and think about the *nirape`ksha* (without expectation or need) Samvit in the body of others. After practicing this for a few days you will experience that you are *sarva-vyaapaka* (all-pervading).

The fact is the states of *jagrita* (waking), *svapna* (dream), *sushupti* (deep sleep) and *samaadhi* (deep meditation) are separate, but the Samvit continues in them all. The Samvit remains unchanged in all these states without needing the body. When you keep your focus on the Samvit the feeling of being a separate individual leaves you.

Niraadhaarataa (being without support).

Empty your mana of all *baahyaalambana* (external supports). Don't permit the slightest possibility of any alternative resolves. *Sankalpa-kalaa* (the skill of making mental resolves) has *jeevatva* (the quality of being a jeeva; an individual being). *Nirvikalpataa* (being free of doubts and dualities) has *brahmatva* (the qualities of the Brahman). Your swarup is the *paripoorna* (complete) *vignaana-svaroop*a (the essence that is acquired Gnan).

Do *smarana* (thinking about Bhagwan).

You are the *shuddha-buddha-svaroop*a (the essence that is pure and enlightened) Paramatma. Everything that exists is the expansion of your own pulsation. Let this double knowledge remain in your mind. Have the certainty that the *sarvagna* (all-knowing), *sarva-kartaa* (doer of everything), *vyaapaka* (all-pervading), *parameshvara* (the Ishwara of all), *svachcha* (unsullied), *svatantra* (self-governed) Shiva is you. Your *shivatva* (quality of being Shiva) will be revealed. See your *vaibhava* (splendor). The separate things seen in this world are like ripples in water, flames in fire, and spreading rays of sunlight. They are your *vaibhav*. You are the *paripoorna* Parameshwara.

The state of *viraama* (repose).

You can use this method in the earlier stages. When you feel exhausted after some exertion, let your body fall on the ground. When the *kshobha-shakti* (the power of agitation), or *vega-shakti* (the power of moving fast) ceases, a mental state of being *nirvikalpa* (without options) arises. [Some Sects that evoke minor supernatural powers use this method even in present times.]

The *vignaatmaa* (the Atma known by acquired Gnan) manifests even through not understanding something properly, by being incapable due to *agnan*, or by the *laya* (dissolving) of the *chitta*.

Stabdhataa (being dumbfounded).

Keep your eyes absolutely unmoving. This is enough to attain *kaivalya* (a state of feeling that no other but you exists). Contract your ears and the lower organs, and do *dhyana* of '*anachkamahalam*'. You will enter into the Brahman of the Sanatana Dharma (The Vedic philosophy). Even now, the word '*mahal*' (palace) is used in the Sant Sampradaya (the traditional teaching of the Mahatmas who have surrendered completely to Bhagwan). The purport of this, here, is that '*anachka*' means, without a syllable; '*ahala*' means, without a consonant. That means do the *chintan* of a state that cannot be described. The feeling of being the Brahman will appear.

Oordva drishti (looking upwards).

Sit in a well or in a deep ditch, and look upwards. Your *buddhi* will become unmoving. Your *chitta* will become free of sense objects.

Stand close to a well or a deep ditch, then look down. Look at the stillness of the place below. The restlessness of the chitta will be stilled instantly.

Sarvatra (everywhere).

Wherever your awareness wanders – whether it is in a blue form (Bhagwan Vishnu) or golden form (Bhagwan Shiva), or some fruit (of an action) that gives you *sukha* (contentment and happiness) – it may be an external or internal form; Shiva, who is the chitta that illuminates, is present everywhere. The objects that are seen are not separate from the Atma that illuminates them and is the swarup of *vignaana* (acquired Gnan) and anand. Therefore, experience the all-pervading presence of that Atma.

Six kinds of Samadhi are commonly described in the Yoga Shastras. Samadhi is when the consciousness remains fixed on the *akhanda-aatmaa* (the eternal Atma that can never be fragmented) that is *advaya* (non-dual) and the essence of the Brahman; whether it is outside or within.

There are two kinds of Samadhi in the hriday; *nirvikalpa* (where no other exists) and *savikalpa* (when both Bhagwan and 'I' exist).

There are two kinds of Savikalpa Samadhis: *drishya samprikta* (connected to vision) and *shabda-samprikta* (connected to sound). These three Samadhis are also achieved through external support. Thus, the total comes to six.

There is a seventh kind of Samadhi: wherever your mana goes, see the Brahman in everything. This is also accepted by Vadanta.

The objects of the senses contain an expression of the *aatma-chaitanya* (the consciousness of the Atma). Nothing can be perceived without the sense of perception. The reflection seen in the mirror is not separate from the mirror, however distorted it seems. Similarly, the world seen in the Atma-chaitanya is not separate from the chaitanya that supports it. Just as the brilliant light is the sun, the contracted consciousness is seen in the form of the world.

Saameepya (proximity).

The *brahma-sattaa* (the existence of the Brahman) remains unbroken in the different states, like the moment just before and after a sneeze, in fear, in grief, in a lonely forest, when running away from a fight, when amazed at some

wonderful sight, when hunger is appeased with a good meal, etc. The Brahma-satta is present in the form of *chidaananda* (conscious happiness). Wise people reflect on this, and enter this consciousness. Others remain trapped in the external experiences.

Smriti (memory).

When any object appears on the path of memory, throw your mana into your past experience of that object, because memory is always about something that has been experienced.

Your mana goes to some other place; your body is temporarily without a mana. Now, look at that *shareera* (body). The one who investigates both the memory and the experience is one. He is one in other places, times, and objects; and he is also present in the present time, place and object. This awareness is apparent without the connection between the body and the *vishaya* (object of the senses).

Paraavartana (reversal; reflection).

Take a look at some object and gently turn your gaze away. Let go of your knowledge about it, or any mental resolve about it. You are resting in *shoonya* (emptiness). You are the *saakshaat anubhava svaroop*a (the essence of direct experience).

Bhakti (loving devotion).

When there is a surge of bhakti for the Parameshwara the person gets *vairaagya* (detachment) for everything else. See the *virakta* (one who has detachment) seated in the buddhi. That is the actual Shakti of Shiva. Just the experience of this feeling makes you become Shiva.

Bhakti does not mean falling at the feet of the Parameshwara who is all-pervading. Bhakti is to make all your feelings and your basic nature one with the Parameshwara.

The *shoonyataa* (emptiness) of the *drishyamaana* (seen).

You are aware of one object or you perceive several objects within you, and in the outside world. What happens? Awaken the feeling of their shoonyata as

soon as you become aware of them. Do not see that they 'are'. Become unaware of even the objects close to you. Do dhyana with the *nirvikalpa samvit* (awareness of no other) in the chitta that illuminates knowledge. Let the feeling arise that none of these are actually present. Just by cultivating this viewpoint you will become *shaanta* (tranquil), Brahma-swarup.

Be free of concerns about shuddhi-ashuddhi.

That, which people of little knowledge have described as *shuddhi* (purity according to the Shastras), is *ashuddhi* (impurity) in *shivaanubhooti* (the experience of Shiva). Let go of the *sankalpa-vikalpa* (resolves - alternatives) of *shuddha-ashuddha* (pure-impure), and be seated in the *samvit* (awareness) of nirvikalpa paramananda.

No matter how well you use earth and water to purify anything, the *bahirmukha* (external object) always remains *apavitra* (impure; ashuddha). It is like a pot that shines because it has been cleaned from outside, but remains dirty inside. The purport is Tattvagan does not have much use for ritualistic cleansing.

If using *mitti-pani* (earth and water) is not an obstacle to obtaining Tattvagnan, what harm is there in using them? All I wish to clarify is that *japa* (ritual chanting), *homa* (offering oblations into the sacred fire), etc can be done only after the body is purified with a bath. This rule does not apply to Gnan.

In Gnan it is desirable to forget these stipulations. There is no need to give thought to whether the person is shuddha or ashuddha. *Snaana* (having a bath) can be done by seven methods – mantra, *mriddhika* (earth; clay), *prakaasha* (light), *vaayu* (wind), *divya-bhaava* (the feeling of being divine), *jaleeya* (with water), and *maansa* (mental).

All these are suitable from the viewpoint of Dharma (instituted religion), but are not necessary for giving deep thought to the Atma-samvit. No matter how thoroughly the body is cleansed, it will remain ashuddha. The highest *pavitrataa* (purity) is to give up the feeling of being the body.

The conclusion is there is no need to chase the concepts of what is *vihita* (prescribed) and what is *nishiddha* (forbidden). Here, the ruling of the definite

duty is to use any method to place your chitta in the *paripoorna vignaana* (the acquired Gnan about being whole).

Go into a Samadhi, do work or remain idle, indulge in *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) – none of these will touch you. A person who has successfully gained command over a mantra for removing poison is immune to poison, even if he drinks it. In the *paramaarthavastu* (the supreme object; the Atma) shuddhi-ashuddhi are not separate from *prakaasha* (the Gnan that illuminates the eternal Truth).

Saakshaat aparoksha poornataa (the direct personal experience of wholeness).

Every person knows, 'I am, I know', whether he has *viveka* (discrimination about the eternal and the transient) or not. This is the *sat-svaroop* (essence of pure existence) *vignataa* (one who has acquired Gnan) Atma. Here, Aham (I) and *vimarsha* (deliberation) are one; meaning, the Aham is *satta* (existence) and Gnan. It is *avinaashee* (eternal) and *sarvagna* (all-knowing). What need is there for an *upaaya* (method for achieving something)?

It is said, 'The pot does not illuminate the sun.' Not even a million upayas can reveal Shiva. You are the *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent) Shiva.

The Samvit Prakash states, 'The Atma-tattva is present in the form that is *aparoksha* (known directly, but not perceived through the senses), *niraavarana* (not concealed), and *sva-prakaasha* (self-illuminated). Those who spread the upaya are *agnaanee* (lacking in Gnan).' The author of Mahamanjari has written, 'Who doesn't know that, which even a fool and simple village maidens know?'

See this Shruti (Vedic verse):

*Uttainam gopaa adrishannutainamudahaaryah,
uttainam vishvaa bhootaani sa drishto mridyaati nah.*

The *paripoornataa* (wholeness) of the Brahman.

Enemy-friend, respect-insult, etc are all the same. Know the Brahman to be *paripoorna*, and be *sukhi* (happy and at peace).

Have no *dve'sha* (hatred) for any, and have no *raaga* (worldly attachment) for any. The feeling of being the Brahman spreads as soon as you give up *raaga-dvesha*.

Everything that is *ave'dya* (cannot be known), *agraahya* (cannot be absorbed), *shoonya* (empty), and *abhaavaanupaatee* (absent in proportion), is all the *paripoorna* Brahman. There is nothing in which the Brahman is not. Nor is there anything where the Brahman is not! There is no *upaya* either, there. It is the *shoonya* that is the form of Shiva.

What is the difference between a *pushpa* (flower) and an *aakaasha pushpa* (a cloud formation like a flower)? Both are mere *sfoorana* (waves of energy). Everything that exists is *sfooran*, after all.

From the *aakaash* (space) to the *niraakaasha* (without space).

Apply your *mana* to the *baahya-aakaasha* (space outside the body). It is *nitya* (eternal), *nir-aashraya* (without any support), *shoonya* (empty), *vyaapaka* (all-pervading), without a beginning or an end.

To apply your *mana* to it means to perceive it without *Gnan* that is the result of *vimarsha* (deliberation). When you reach this stage, the *nir-aalambana che'tana* (consciousness that needs no support) will arise, and you will penetrate the realm that is *nirakasha* and *ashoonya* (not empty).

The *mana* is restless, so whichever sense objects it goes to are to be given up in this *nirvikalpa* (without alternatives) *chetan* that is the form of awareness, using the same *vimarsh*. If the *mana* strays again, give up the objects again. When *vairaagya* (detachment for the external world) and *abhyaasa* (practice) are strengthened, the *mana* will become the *niralamban* and *paripoorna* *Paramatma*.

The fact is, whatever be the form of *Gnan* – 'I', 'mine', 'this' etc, the *gnaana-aatmaa* (the *Atma* that is pure *Gnan*) does not become *parichhinna* (separate; fragmented) by the sense objects that are separate. It remains the *poorna-Atma*.

The reason for this is, the *vimarsh* about the *Aham* never ceases; it remains the one *nir-vishe'sha* (without any specific quality) in the various causes. The *Atma*

is, of course, the swarup of *paramaananda* (supreme joy). The Atma of all is one, whether the person is a *gnaanee* (having Gnan) or *agnanee* (not having Gnan).

Pre`ma (pure love) is the Brahman. It always remains *aananda-svabhaava* (the essential nature of joyfulness). It is not broken by the feeling of being a little, or being poorna. Whether there is Gnan or agnan the quality of supreme joyfulness is never destroyed.

In the forms of Gnani-agnani it is the *svatantra* (self-ruled) Parameshwara who is being perceived. There is no need to break up the Parameshwara's quality of absolute independence by imagining Him to be *abodha* (lacking comprehensive understanding) or *sambodha* (complete understanding). The Paramatma is always nirvikalpa.

Naamuchchaarana (uttering Bhagwan's name).

The Pancharatra says that Moksha (liberation from rebirth or from worldly concerns) is achieved by just uttering a name of the Paramatma, like Vasudev, Vishnu, Vishvambhara, Hari, or any other. You should also say words like *nitya* (eternal), *vibhu* (omnipresent), *niraadhaara* (needing no support), *vyaapaka* (all-pervading) etc, and meditate on these attributes.

You yourself are the meaning of these words.

Do *chintana* (give deep thought) in keeping with Vedanta. This interactive world is like a web that is an illusion without substance. *Indrajaala* (an illusionary web) is not a real object. Shanti is achieved by meditating on this.

The Atma is *nir-vikaara* (free of distortions). It is pure bodha, pure chit, and without divisions. Different kinds of knowledge and actions are mere *vikaara* (distortions). It is through these that external objects are created and known. It is written in the Chandragyan that all shoonya is *niraalamba* (without anything to support it); it is a *bhranti* (false understanding).

From shoonya comes shakti. From shakti come the varna. Mantras are created by varnas, and mantras create *srishti* (this world). Therefore, this srishti is nothing; it is only pure samvit. This is the highest *bhaavanaa* (feeling); meaning, there is nothing after this.

Kalpanaa (imaginings) are *mithyaa* (relative truths).

‘I am *chinmaatra* (pure consciousness). There is neither *bandhana* (bondage) nor *mukti* (liberation) in me. How can there be bandhan-mukti where there is no *de`sha* (place)? It is because of not deliberating on my swarup that the spectre of fear glimmers. Can a straw scarecrow built to frighten birds ever frighten wild elephants? Worldly considerations have no value for a Tattvagna (one who knows the Tattva).

This is bandhan, this is *nishiddha* (forbidden), this is *kartavya* (a duty), this is a *saadhana* (method) for Moksha (liberation) – all these are imagined. They are *viparyaya* (reverse movements of the mana). They are like the reflected image of the sun in water. I am the pure consciousness that illuminates the buddhi, but I am not connected to the buddhi. I am not the buddhi; the buddhi is not mine, nor is it *satya* (an eternal truth). Sukha-dukha etc get attached to me through the *indriya* (senses).’

Let go of them, and you are Mukta.

Paripoorna vignaana (complete, acquired Gnan).

The mana that makes resolves, the buddhi that is the form of consciousness, the *praana-shakti* (power of the life spirit), and the limited *pramaataa* (awareness that establishes) are all differences that must be destroyed. You yourself are the paripoorna vignan swarup.

The *svatantra* (self-governed) Paramatma plays with the *de`ha-indriyaadi* (body-senses, etc) sometimes, and sometimes He lets go of them. He moves about at whim, and sometimes as *nishprapancha* (without an interactive world) and sometimes in the form of everything. In Him there is no coming, no going, no seeking, no obtaining, no *teertha* (holy place), no *shraaddha* (rituals for the departed), no paapa and no punya. There is no Swarga (Heaven) and no Narak (Hell).

Everything we experience is an expansion of the samvit. It is a miracle of our consciousness. It is a thought in the serene ocean of the Atma. It is the Atma that is *sarva* (everything), *sarvaateeta* (beyond everything), and *sarvasaakshee* (the witness of everything). It is free of the creation of the *saakshee-saakshya*

(the witness – that, which is witnessed). That is our own Atma, and is the absolutely complete and total vignan.

Chapter 6.

The *manovignana* (psychology) of *bhakti-saadhanaa* (effort for getting Bhakti).

[Shri Vishwanath Chakravarty of the Shriman Madhva Gaudeshwar Sampradaya is considered an unparalleled *rasika* (sentimental) bhakta. He has written a commentary in the Shrimad Bhagwat, giving its quintessence. In his own words, 'This commentary is *bhakta-chitta-harshinee* – meaning, it fills the chitta of a bhakta with joy – and *rasavarshinee* – meaning, it showers sweet emotion.' This work is a treasure trove for those who are like bees in search of the nectar of Bhakti.

Among the works of the great bhakta is a small book called Madhurya Kadambini. *Maadhurya* means sweetness and *kaadambini* means a cloud. This book describes the *krama* (serial order) of the mental stages of a bhakta. It is my conviction that this succinct presentation will be beneficial for bhaktas as well as students of the psychology of Bhakti.]

The first *amritavristi* (shower of nectar).

The Vedas have described the Brahman as being beyond the *aanandamaya purusha* (the Supreme Being, who is pure bliss), as the one who is established

as the final and ultimate existence that can never be negated. He is also described repeatedly as *rasa* (sweet emotion) and *anand*. This is an indication of Shri Krishna, who is described in the Shrimad Bhagwat as the *vajra* (thunderbolt), *naravara* (the most excellent man), *smara* (love, Cupid) etc according to the feeling of the individual. He is called the *pratishthaa* (prestige) of the Gita.

That Prince of Vraja, Shyam Sundar, son of Nanda, adopts a *leelaa* (frolic), a *shuddha sattvamaya* (pure and filled with pure existence) form, a name, and *guna* (attributes), without needing any specific reason. He manifests at His own sweet will, as *shravana* (listening to Bhagwan's discourses), *nayana* (eyes; looking at His image), *mana* (emotional mind), *buddhi* (intellect), etc as well as other senses and *vrittis*. This Shyam Sundar (blue-hued, beautiful) form is eternal. Just as He comes in the Yadu-vansha (the lineage of Yadu) and Raghu-vansha (the lineage of Raghu), as Shri Krishna and Shri Rama, He also comes into the lives of who have true love for Him.

Bhagwan manifests at His own sweet will, without needing any reason to do so. Bhagwan's *bhakti* is also *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent) in the same way. No *he`tu* (purpose; motive) is required for it to manifest. Words like *ahe`tukee* (without any reason), *apratihataa* (unobstructed), *yadrichhayaa* (at His will) have been used to describe Bhakti in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Yadrichha means done at His own volition, without the restraints of rules. If the meaning of this word is taken to mean an *anirvachaneeya* (something that cannot be defined) *saubhaagya* (good fortune) that gives Bhakti, a question rises up. Is this good fortune the result of some good deed, or without any karma?

If Bhakti is accepted as the result of some karma and good fortune, it will be dependent on karmas. Its self-effulgent characteristic cannot be established. If *bhaagya* (destiny that is the result of past deeds) is not accepted as *karmajanya* (created by karmas) it will be *anirvachaniya*, and *bhaagya* will, itself, become *agne`ya* (something that cannot be known), and *asiddha* (cannot be established). How will it be the *kaarana* (cause) of Bhakti? Therefore, Bhakti is not the fruit of *bhagya*.

If it is accepted that Bhagwan's *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) is the cause of Bhakti, the question rises, 'What is the cause of this kripa?' There is no end for such questioning of *kaarana-kaarya* (cause-effect); it will lead to the *dosha* (fault) of *anavasthaa* (disorder; confusion).

The most important fact is that Bhagwan's kripa does not take the *aashraya* (shelter) of any *upaadhi* (a superimposition connected to something; an attribute) to shower on someone. If we accept that even this is dependent on some cause, it will result in having to accept that Bhagwan is guilty of partiality, since it is not given alike to all. Why does Bhagwan favor some and bestow kripa on them, while keeping others bereft of kripa?

To punish the wicked and protect His bhaktas is not a dosha; it is a praiseworthy attribute, because Bhagwan has *bhakta-vaatsalya* (motherly love for His bhaktas). This is one of His most admirable qualities. His bhakta-vatsalya overwhelms the person and manifests at random.

It is the same with the kripa of Bhagwan's bhaktas. It needs no cause for its being showered on someone. Even so, as far as the *madhyama koti* (of the middle level) bhaktas are concerned, some partiality has to be accepted. An *uttama koti* (highest level) of bhakta sees Bhagwan in all, and all in Bhagwan. The middle level bhakta, however, has prema for Bhagwan, *maitree* (good-will) for bhaktas, compassion for the suffering, and indifference towards those who have *dve'sha* (ill-will).

The Shrimad Bhagwat says that because partiality is shown to the middle level bhaktas, it is not illogical that Bhagwan bestows special kripa on those who are the *kripaa-paatra* (receptants of kripa) of His bhaktas. One of His attributes is that He is ruled by the wishes of His bhaktas.

Why does a bhakta shower kripa? It is because bhakti fills his heart. Bhakti leads to kripa, and kripa leads to Bhakti – this shows the self-effulgent quality of Bhakti, because it is the bhakti in the heart of the bhakta that manifests as kripa, and sets in motion the feeling of bhakti in the heart of the disciple.

It is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat that it is only by great good fortune that *shraddhaa* (faith) for *bhagvat-se'vaa* (rendering service to Bhagwan) arises in

the heart of any person. There, too, the purport is that the compassion of the bhakta crosses across the bhagya of a person to bestow Bhakti.

Bhagwan gifts His bhaktas with such superior power that they have the capacity to use Bhagwan's kripa to bestow Bhakti on a person; whereas Bhagwan is restrained by His *samataa* (impartiality), but is ruled by His bhaktas' wishes. This is Bhagwan's *prasaada* (boon).

Bhagwan voluntarily assumes a form and wins the hearts of His bhaktas by His actions in the Avatar He chooses to assume. From the gross viewpoint, His Avatars are for the purpose of destroying the wicked, because they are a burden on this earth.

If *nishkama karma* (actions done without expecting any worldly benefits) are said to be the gross cause for Bhakti to manifest in a person, that does not hinder the self-effulgent quality of Bhakti in any way.

The Shrimad Bhagwat describes Bhakti in both ways. It cannot be attained by methods like Yoga, Sankhya, giving in charity, self-imposed austerities, Yagnas, etc. However, it also states that these methods are helpful in attaining Bhakti.

The *saattvika* (of the lofty tendency) Bhakti of which Gnan is the predominant part, can be obtained by *saadhana* (methods for spiritual progress). The Sattvik Bhakti of which prema is the goal can also be attained by effort, but this is for the *saguna-saakaara* (the Ishwara with attributes and form). Bhakti for the *nirguna* (the Brahman without attributes), of which prema is a part, cannot be obtained by any of these methods. In this context, *daana* (giving in charity), *vrata* (self-imposed austerities), *tapasyaa* (severe asceticism), *tyaaga* (renunciation), etc are also connected to Bhagwan. It has been stated clearly that Bhakti rises from Bhakti. This establishes the fact that Bhakti is *ahaitukee* (having no special cause) and *svayam-prakash*.

Bhagvatbhakti (Bhakti for Bhagwan) is a *nishre`yasa maarga* (the highest path to good fortune). Even Dharma, Gnan and Yoga are not successful without this Bhakti. This has been stated unequivocally in the ancient books. The conclusion is other methods are not capable of giving their fruits, if done without Bhakti. On the other hand, Bhakti needs no other sadhan for its fruit – prema – to be given.

The Bhagwat describes how this effort for the most supreme path can be successful even if the person lacks Gnan and *vairagya* (detachment). Bhagwan's *bhajana* (loving meditation) done along with the renouncing of all worldly duties, gives Bhakti. Bhakti is the *nirape`ksha saadhana* (a method that needs no help from any other). All other sadhans are *saape`ksha* (needing some support).

Jaati (caste), *shastra* (the Scriptures), *japa* (ritual chanting), *tapa* (severe ascetism), etc done without Bhakti are lifeless; they are nothing more than self-entertainment. All the sadhans are dependent on Bhakti. For example, Karma Yoga (a ritual done to please Bhagwan) is not only dependent on Bhakti, it is also dependent on the *de`sha* (place), *kaala* (time), *paatra* (eligible person), *dravya* (materials used), *anushaasana* (the rules), *pavitrataa* (purity, according to the Shastras), etc.

Bhakti is not bound by any rules of place, time, or objects. Bhagwan's *naama* (name) can be uttered even in an *uchhishta dashaa* (an impure state, without rinsing the mouth after eating something). Uttering Bhagwan's naam is a method for crossing over the sea of this world, whether it is done with faith or with disdain. However, Karma Yoga becomes a cause of misfortune if the mantras are not spoken in the correct method.

Just as Karma Yoga must be done with a *nishkama bhaava* (with no consideration of worldly benefit), Gnan rises only after the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclination and *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality) has been purified. Therefore, this, too, is dependent on *kaarya* (actions; external factors).

The Shastras criticize a person who is eligible for Gnan, but has the misfortune to become a *duraachaaree* (a person who has wrong habits). There are episodes in the Shastras where Kansa, Hiranyakashipu, and Ravana give philosophical lectures, but there is a complete lacking of Gnan in their heart.

This is not the case with Bhakti. Even a *hridrogee* (one who has heart trouble) is eligible for reading the *raasa panchaadhyayee* (five chapters in the Bhagwat that describe Bhagwan's frolic of dancing with the gopis of Vrindavan). If this results in Bhakti arising in the heart, the person's heart will

become pure. First comes Bhakti and then comes *dosha-nivritti* (removal of faults). Bhakti uplifts even a person who has wrong habits.

The Vishnu *paarshada* (messengers of Bhagwan Vishnu) described Ajamil as a bhakta. Who can deny that it was his son, named Narayana, who Ajamil called out to? Ajamil got liberated by the greatness of *naama-aabhaasa* (an illusion of taking Bhagwan's name).

In Karma Yoga and other sadhans, factors like the place, time, person, purity of the antahkarana, etc are supporting factors; and if they are not right, they become obstacles in a person's path of spirituality. These methods are dependent on a number of factors. Bhakti gives life to them. They are ineffective when done without Bhakti.

It is not proper to say that Bhakti is obtained by Gnan, because the fruit of Gnan is Moksha (liberation), but Bhakti is described as being superior. Bhagwan gives Mukti (Moksha) more readily than He gives Bhakti. Even among those who have obtained Mukti there are very few who are devoted to Narayana. Bhagwan Himself makes Indra (the King of Swarga) His senior, by manifesting as Upendra (Indra's younger brother), thus showing His great compassion. This does not degrade Bhagwan in any way.

Similarly, Bhakti sometimes bolsters the importance of Gnan by taking a secondary status. This does not demean Bhakti in any way; it only reveals Bhakti's great compassion. Bhakti is both the *saadhana* (method) as well as the *saadhya* (goal to be achieved). Therefore, Bhakti is the jewel in the crown of *purushaartha* (human achievement).

Bhakti is Bhagwan's own swarup. Therefore, it is like Him, supremely powerful, all-pervading, overcoming all, giving life to all, the most superior, supremely self-governed, and self-effulgent. Those who turn away from Bhakti and seek other things lack judgement. Life is not successful if a person lacks Bhagwad-bhakti.

'Ko vai na se`ve`ta binaa nare`taram.'

The Second Amritavrishti.

There is no scope for *dvaita-vaada* (the principle of duality) or *advaita-vaada* (the principle of non-duality) in the Madhurya Kadambini. For this, you can, if you wish, have a *darshana* (vision; glimpse) of *aishvarya-kaadambini* (the cloud that is the Ishwara).

The cause of *manushya* (humans) are the *khe`ta* (fields). It is in these that the creeper of Bhakti appears. It is not connected to wild grass or weeds in any way. Those who have love for Bhagwan are like bees that reject any wish for all other fruits, and take the *aashraya* (shelter) of Bhakti.

The basic life of the wish-fulfilling creeper is to be and to do whatever is pleasing to Bhagwan. Like a magic stone that turns iron into gold, Bhakti induces a worldly person to renounce worldly interests, and the chitta becomes pure, like pure gold, in just a short time.

When the creeper of Bhakti passes the sprouting stage, two shoots appear. They are sadhans, called *kle`shaghnee* (destroyer of strife) and *shubhadaa* (bestower of good fortune). Both these create a desire for Bhagwan. They also give a relationship with Bhagwan, like *priya* (Beloved), Atma, *putra* (son), etc, and make the desire bright with deep affection.

The Monarch of this *antarde`sha* (inner world) is *raaga* (attachment; love), but in the outer world, the people get engrossed in bhajan at the command of the Shastras. Because of this, there is an illusion of a slight aridity, concealing the Beloved and their relationship of love with Him, to some extent. This is why their actions are ruled by the Vedas. It is certainly true that both the *vaidhee* (ritualistic) and the *raagaanugaa* (born from raaga) bhaktis destroy klesha and bestow liberation.

The Shastras state that klesha is *avidyaa* (nescience), *asmitaa* (egotism), *raaga* (worldly attachment), *dve`sha* (hatred), and *abhinive`sha* (identification with the body). All forms of paapa, like *praarabdha* (caused by fate created from past actions), *a-praarabdha* (not caused by fate; done at will), *roodha* (developed), and *beeja* (in seed form) are included in klesha. Bhakti is called *kle`shaghni* (destroyer of klesha) because it destroys all these.

A bhakta should have indifference for the vishays that turn a person away from Bhagwan. He should have *trishnaa* (longing) for Bhagwan. He should want to

be, and to do everything that is pleasing to Bhagwan. He should have *kripaa* (compassion), *kshamaa* (forgiveness), *satya* (truthfulness), *saralataa* (straightforwardness), *dhairya* (fortitude), *gaambheerya* (gravity), *maanadavya* (respect others), *amaanitva* (humility), etc. These are *shubha sadguna* (good qualities that bestow good fortune); because Bhakti bestows these beneficial tendencies, it is called *shubhadaa*.

The Shrimad Bhagwat's statement that the life of a bhakta contains all the sadgunas and Devtas (divine influences) is absolutely correct. When Bhakti sprouts in the heart the twin leaves – kleshaghni and shubhada – arise simultaneously. There is a *krama* (serial order) in their growth, but this is not understood by everybody; only a discerning person can recognize the signs.

Shraddhaa (faith) is the first quality that rises in an *adhikaaree* (person who is qualified) for Bhakti. It comes in the form of a staunch belief in the substance established by the Shastras. The person tries to live a life in keeping with the strictures of the Shastras. He is anxious not to deviate from the right way of life. This can be natural or it can be enforced.

After this, he takes the *aashraya* (shelter) of the lotus feet of the Sadguru, and has a *jignaasaa* (wish to know) about *sadaachaara* (good habits). He associates with people who lead the life of a Satpurusha (virtuous person). This leads to his becoming engrossed in bhajan.

The *bhajana-kriyaa* (doing bhajan) takes many forms, from lukewarm to wholehearted devotion, before he gets *driddha nishthaa* (firm faith with reverence). The states of the mana vary, from utsahamayi, ghanatarala, vyudhavikalpa, vishayasangara, niyamakshama and tarangarangini. These are the six forms of bhajan-kriya.

1. The *utsaahamayee* stage is like a student who starts to study the Shastras with zeal, thinking he will become a scholar in a short time. In the same way, when a person begins to do bhajan he feels he will soon get bhakti. His enthusiasm increases.
2. The *ghanataralaa* stage is when a person starts the *anushthana* (ritual) of Bhakti. He is not always able to carry them out. Thus, it is *ghana* (dense) at times and *tarala* (fickle) at times. Just as a student of the Shastras comprehends the topic and feels happy at times and

sometimes he is unable to penetrate some profound aspect and becomes *rooksha* (dry) and *shithila* (lax).

3. The *vyudhavikalpa* stage is when a bhakta is confused about what is right for him to do. 'Should I stay with *parigraha* (family and wealth)? Should I make my family and relatives *vaishnava* (devotees of Bhagwan Vishnu)? Should I stay at home and do bhajan or should I leave everything and live in Vrindavan, doing bhajan-kirtan unhindered by worldly considerations, and make my life fulfilled?

Is it proper to renounce everything now, or should it be done when I am old? One cannot depend on the *grahasthaashrama* (the state of life of a married householder). Great bhaktas have renounced the world when they were in the prime of life. I shouldn't delay any more; but my *vairagya* (detachment) is not yet strong enough.

What ought I to do? Is *vairagya* essential for Bhakti? If Bhakti is attained by *vairagya*, it would be *saape'ksha* (dependent on another factor; not independent), but if *vairagya* comes from Bhakti there is no *dosha* (fault) in it, because it is an experience of *santosh* (contentment).

Should I remain a grihastha or become a *virakta* (one who has renounced the world)? Should I do only japa and kirtan, or should I do *shravana* (listening to and grasping the purport of spiritual discourses)? *Se'vaa* (rendering service) to Vaishnavas is also of great importance.'

Thus, when different alternatives arise in the mind, it is called the state of *vyudhavikalpa*.

4. In the state of *vishaya-sankara* there is only one *aave'sha* (overwhelming surge) for either Vishnu or *vishaya* (objects of the senses). 'These *bhoga* (worldly indulgences) make me slack in Bhakti Yoga (attaching oneself to Bhagwan with Bhakti). Even if I give up some of them I will succumb again. I am not able to give up worldly pleasures.' Attachment to worldly pleasures is very strong; not easily given up. The tussle between temptation and detachment continues. At times, worldly pleasures win and at times the mana succeeds in overcoming temptation. This wavering state of the mana is called *vishayasankara*.
5. In the state called *niyamakshamaa*, the bhakta thinks, 'Today onwards I will complete this amount of japa. I will do this many *dandavata pranaama* (prostrate full length). I will do seva of bhaktas. I will not

discuss any subject that does not pertain to Bhagwan. I will stop associating with people who discuss worldly matters. In spite of making such resolves every day, the bhakta is unable to adhere to them completely.

6. In the *vishayasankara* state the bhakta is incapable of giving up sense objects. In the *niyamakshmaa* state he is incapable of increasing the sadhans of bhakti.

It is the nature of Bhakti that everybody is inclined to feel affection for a person who has bhakti. When this happens, his wealth begins to increase. '*Janaanuraaga prabhavaa hi sampadah*' (the effect of people's goodwill is wealth). When such *vibhooti* (glories) start coming into the life of a person he begins to get *laabha* (benefits), *poojaa* (reverence), *pratishthaa* (a high reputation), etc. At this stage it is like the *bhakti-lataa* (creeper of Bhakti) sprouting little offshoots that sway in the air. This is called the *tarangaranginee* state. Just as it is essential to prune the smaller offshoots of a creeper, the offshoots of the creeper of Bhakti should also be cut away completely.

The Third Amritavarsha.

The removal of *anartha* (misfortune) is described now. There are four kinds of anartha.

1. Caused by paapa.
2. Caused by punya.
3. Caused by aparadha.
4. Caused by Bhakti.

Agnan about the Ishwara being worthy of bhajan, *ahankaara* (pride), raaga, dvesha, and *abhinive'sha* (identifying with the body) are the five *kle'sha* (suffering) caused by paapa.

Abhinivesh in bhoga is caused by punya. Aparaadha (an offence) is mostly *naama-aparaadha* (an offence against Bhagwan's name). The offence of laxity in seva is generally removed by chanting Bhagwan's *naama* (name). Not being alert about seva-aparadha also becomes naam-aparadha.

The Shastras say that a person who does an *aparadha*, taking refuge in the power of Bhagwan's *naam*, is not purified even by *satya* (being truthful), *ahimsaa* (not hurting any being), and other self-imposed restraints. Even Yamaraj (the presiding deity of Death) cannot make him *pavitra* (pure, according to the Shastras). Here, 'naam' indicates Bhakti.

That which cures the ailment called *anartha* is *naama-aushadhee* (the medicine of Bhagwan's name). It is well known that when *praayashchitta* (penance done to atone for wrongdoing) is done by the methods prescribed by the Shastras; by a person who has done something wrong with full awareness, thinking that his *paapa* will be wiped away by doing a *prayashchitta*, the *paapa* is not forgiven. Such a person is not purified by any ritual; in fact, his *paapa* becomes more dense.

Once a person sets out on the path of Bhakti there is no anxiety about any kind of harm. 'Only the *japa* of the *dashaakshara mantra* (a mantra of ten letters) gives *siddhi* (success).' Because of full conviction in the truth of such statements, any fault in the *anushthaana* (ritual) saves the person from *naam-aparadha* if there is any fault in the *anushthana*. This is because there is no wish to do any *paapa* in his heart. Where there is no criticism of such a lapse and no mention of any *prayashchitta*, there is no *paapa* either.

In the *bhakti-maarga* (path of Bhakti) a longing for developing good qualities comes when the parts (methods for Bhakti) are mixed up, but that is not an *aparadha*, because the path of Bhakti is also meant for an *avidvaana adhikaaree* (a person who is not learned, but is eligible). In this, a person can close his eyes and run without coming to harm. In this, there is no *pratyavaaya* (adverse effect; harm, instead of good), or *patana* (downfall). This is because there are no *aparadhas* like *maana-mada* (pride – vanity), *siddhi* (pride of achievement), or turning away from Bhagwan; meaning, to never offend Hiim knowingly. Chanting His *naam* continuously quiets all *aparadhas* and *baadhaa* (obstacles).

The first *naam-aparadha* is *nindaa* (speaking ill) of any Sant (true Mahatma). *Ninda* includes *dve'sha* (aversion; hatred), *droha* (opposition), etc. if an *aparadha* is committed the person should surrender at the feet of the Sant and ask to be pardoned.

The methods of seeking forgiveness include *pranaama* (bowing down), *stuti* (eulogizing), *sammaana* (showing honour), etc. The treatment of a burn is to heat the burnt portion gently. If a Sant is not appeased in a short time, the person should serve him persistently with sincerity until he is pleased. If the Sant's displeasure is due to the form of the *aparadha* being very great, the person should take the *ashraya* of detaching his *mana* from worldly considerations and chanting Bhagwan's *naam*.

The *naam* is a storehouse of immense power. It has provision for redemption. However, if a person takes the *ashraya* of the *naam* to avoid asking the Sant's forgiveness, that also becomes a *naam-aparadha*.

It is not that only those who are compassionate, free of *raaga-dvesha*, and have *titikshaa* (forebearance) are Sants; and that *naam-aparadha* is at speaking ill of only such people. The saying, '*Jo bhaje` bhagavanta so antamein santa`*' (any person who does Bhagwan's *bajan* ultimately becomes a Sant) is perfectly valid. So, one should not speak ill of people who do *bhajan* even in the early stages of their *Bhakti*.

If a Sant does not show displeasure at someone's misbehavior to him, due to being engrossed in thoughts of Bhagwan, that is a different matter. The person who does *ninda* is guilty of the *aparadha* in any case. If that happens the person should, for his own sake, propitiate the Sant by bowing down and serving the Sant sincerely. He should beg for forgiveness with all sincerity. The Sant may not be angry, he may not give a *shaapa* (curse), but the dust of a Sant's feet is intolerant, and destroys anyone who dishonours a Sant.

There are some *mahaa-purusha* (Sants, Mahatmas) who are not easily recognized as Sants. They are wells of unsolicited compassion. They are *nir-dvandva* (free of duality) and *svachhanda* (act at their own whim). There is no rule or rationale about their showering Grace on anyone, at any time.

For example, Jada Bharata showered Grace on the undeserving King Rahugan, who forced him to carry his (Rahugan's) palanquin. Chediraj Uparicharvasu showed great mercy to the villains who attacked him with evil intent. The great sinner Magha, hit Prabhu Nityananda on the head, Prabhu Nityananda showered Grace on him.

Guru-avagnaa (disdaining the Guru) also gives rise to the same offence as *naam-aparadha*. The method of atonement is also the same.

We will now discuss the subject of the difference between Shiva and Vishnu.

Chaitanya (consciousness) is of two kinds. One is *svatantra* (independent; self-governed) and the other is *a-svatantra* (dependent; ruled by another). The first is the all-pervading Ishwara, and the other is the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) who has limited powers and is subjugated to the Ishwara.

The Ishwara's *chaitanya* is also of two kinds. The first is free of the touch of *maayaa* (the Ishwara's power of illusion) and the second accepts a touch of Maya through Bhagwan's *leelaa* (frolic).

The first is called Narayana, Vishnu, etc. The other is called Shiva and other names. *Harinirguna* means, Hari = Bhagwan, is *nirguna* = without attributes and tendencies. *Shivashaktiyuktah* means, Shiva accompanied by Shakti.

Shiva should not be considered a *jeeva* because He chooses to have *gunas* (attributes and tendencies). Just as milk is a form of curd, the *nirguna* Govind is the *saguna* (with attributes and tendencies) Shiva. It is He, who is the Brahman.

Just as *agni* (fire) is present in a piece of wood that burns and smokes, it is present in the wood before it starts to burn and smoke.

All these points should be given serious thought. The idea that Shiva and Vishnu are different should be rejected. There are many differences between *jeevas*. Some *jeevas* are covered by *avidyaa* (nescience; lack of *vidya*, the right perception), and some are not covered by *avidya*. Some have a surge of *aishvarya shakti* (the power of the Ishwara) and some don't.

Those who have *aishvarya-shakti* are also of two kinds. One is like the four brothers called the Sanat Kumars, who possess Gnan given by a portion of the Ishwara's consciousness. The other kind is Brahma and others, who are enabled by a portion of Bhagwan's Maya, and create the world.

In the same way we get the *abhe`da* (lack of separateness; oneness) of Shiva and Vishnu, because the form of consciousness in both is one. In some *mahaa-kalpa* (cycle of Time), a *jeeva* even becomes Maha Shiva. In that case, there is

no need to consider Shree (Laxmi), Vishnu, Shiva, the Brahman and the Surya (Sun) etc to be separate, and argue over them.

People who try to show loyalty to one by speaking ill of another should understand the subject from learned Sants, and do naam-sankritan (singing the names of Bhagwan). This will uproot the denseness of the intellect caused by naam-aparadha.

When people speak ill of those who do Vedic rituals, and have theological discussions to establish there is no Bhagwan, they also guilt of aparadha. To save yourself from this offense, you should congratulate people who do *dharmaanushthaana* (Vedic rituals). You should also wash away the paapa of your *vaanee* (speech) by doing sankirtan of Bhagwan's naam.

The Shrutis establish Dharma and Gnan. They also encourage people who are blinded by love for Bhagwan, and adhere to no rules. Such people are *anadhikaaree* (not qualified), but they are encouraged to take the path of Bhakti. If a Sant showers kripa on them, and his words sink into the heart of the bhakta, the person guilty of naam-aparadha is blessed indeed! The naam-aparadha is removed.

The causes, and removal, of other aparadhas should be understood in the same way.

We will now investigate the *anartha* (misfortune) born from Bhakti.

When a sapling is planted a number of new branches sprout out of its trunk. They weaken the tree. Pruning them makes the tree healthy and strong. Similarly, when a person walks on the path of Bhakti he starts receiving *poojaa* (being treated with reverence), *pratishtaa* (honour), *laabha* (worldly benefits), *khyati* (fame), *keerti* (a good reputation), etc due to Bhakti. These are offshoots that destroy their origin. This is why they are called anarthas caused by Bhakti. A spiritual aspirant should be vigilant about them.

There are five ways of removing these anartha.

1. *E`kade`shavartinee.*
2. *Bahude`shavartinee.*
3. *Prayikee.*

4. *Poornaa*.
5. *Aatyantiki*.

The first is removed by doing bhajan. The second is removed when the person gets *nishthaa* (firm faith). The third, when the person gets *rati* (passion), the fourth is removed by prema, and the fifth is removed when the bhakta gets the lotus feet of Bhagwan.

In the episode of Chitraketu, his aparadha against Shankar Bhagwan was done after he obtained Bhagwan's darshan. This, however, is not a real offence; it appears to be an offence. The purpose of this episode is to establish the principle that even after getting Bhagwan, the *shareera* (body) may be that of a messenger of Bhagwan or an Asura (one of the demonic races); it makes no difference to the prema he has for Bhagwan.

Jay and Vijay offended the Sanat Kumars. This was due to their uncontrolled urge to do what is pleasing to Bhagwan. [Jay and Vijay are the eternal gate keepers of Bhagwan Narayana. They refused to allow the four brothers called Sanat Kumars to disturb Bhagwan when he was resting, and were cursed by the sages. They had to be born three times as Asuras, and be killed by Bhagwan before returning to Vaikuntha.] Jay and Vijay said to Bhagwan, 'O Prabhu! O Narayana! We know that a wish to fight rises in You occasionally. The strength of all others is limited; they are not fit for You to fight with. On the other hand, we have no antagonistic feeling for You, so how can Your wish be fulfilled? Therefore, Swami, make us temporarily antagonistic and enjoy the fight You feel like having. It is unbearable for us that there is even a hint of lacking in Your *paripoornataa* (being complete). Make Your *bhakta-vaatsalya* (motherly love for bhaktas) secondary, and fulfill our *hattha-prarthanaa* (a prayer that is also an insistence).'

Bhagwan accepted their appeal and induced them to offend the Sanat Kumars. This is why Jay and Vijay had to be born as Asuras. If any such wish crops up in your heart, you should destroy it at once, with a firm resolve to always be *anukoola* (favorable) to Bhagwan.

There are hundreds of statements in the Shastras that all paapas are destroyed when a person utters Bhagan's naam just once. Even a butcher becomes free of the bondage of this world by hearing the naam of Bhagwan

just once. In the episode of Ajamil the principle that one *naam-aabhaasa* (the illusion of taking Bhagwan's naam) removes even avidya, and becomes a cause for obtaining Bhagwan, is established.

Under the circumstances it does not seem logical to accept that the aparadhas of bhagwatbhakti etc are removed in a serial order. It is undeniable that the naam has this power, but if the naam is displeased with the person who has done an aparadha, it hides its shakti. That is why anartha gets life. The messengers of Yamaraj cannot attack a person who chants Bhagwan's name.

The Shrimad Bhawat says, '*Na te` yama paashadhritashacha tadbhataanusvapne`pi pashyanti.`Na vidyate` tasya yamairhi shuddhih.`*

In context with naam-aparadha the use of the word 'yama' does not indicate the Yamadootas; it refers to the eight steps of the Yoga Darshan.

If some capable, wealthy person neglects looking after his employee because of some offence done by the servant, the servant is overcome by sorrow, poverty, guilt and remorse. However, no one else dares to raise a finger at the man. If he succeeds in pleasing his master by serving him lovingly, and shows repentance, the master is gradually won over. All the doshas of the servant are automatically removed. In the same way, if a sadhak repeatedly serves a bhagvat-bhakta, Shatras, Guru, etc lovingly, with no worldly consideration, the naam is pleased with him and all his dukha is destroyed. There is no dispute about this.

Never think, 'I have never done any naam-aparadha.' Sometimes it happens that a person gets no sign of prema for Bhagwan even after doing kirtan for along time. The cause is that it is not possible to gauge the aparadhas done in previous births, or even in this life. It is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat that if a person utters Bhagwan's naam, and his eyes remain dry, he feels no tingling of love, and his heart does not soften, he is an extremely hard-hearted person!

The Bhakti Prasad Sindhu concludes that doing shravan-kirtan of Bhagwan's names and gunas bestows prema instantly. Drinking *charana-amrita* (the nectarlike water with which the feet of Bhagwan's image have been

washed) gives siddhi instantly. Partaking of substances that have been offered to Bhagwan quiets turbulence of the senses, because they are *chinmaya* (having consciousness). Even so, if none of these result in Bhakti arising, it is because of past aparadhas.

Now, the question is whether the person guilty of naam-aparadha will remain turned away from Bhagwan. Will even taking the refuge of his Sadguru, and doing bhajan not save him?

A person does not feel like eating when he has fever; he feels revulsion at the very thought of food. Similarly, a person whose naam-aparadha is great has no inclination for shravan, kirtan and other methods for Bhakti. When fever comes down, the person gradually gets the urge to eat. In the same way, when the strength of the naam-aparadha is reduced the person begins to enjoy doing bhajan.

This is how a person becomes an *adhikaaree* (qualified; eligible) for bhajan. A person with fever is unable to absorb the full nutrition of the food he eats. It is not enough to cure him of his ailment. Good food and proper treatment bring good health in due course.

In the same way, shravan, *saadhu-sangati* (associating with people devoted to Bhagwan), doing bhajan, discarding wrong habits, staunch faith, and having an inclination for Bhagwan – is the *krama* (serial order) by which bhakti is born.

Some people point out that it is seen that no sign of bhakti appears in the life of those who do naam-kirtan, etc. In fact, *paapa-vritti* (an inclination for doing paapa) is seen in some of them. They face worldly sorrows repeatedly, resulting in an increase in actions that are driven by their *praarabdha* (fate created by actions of past lives). When this happens to someone, the person should not get frightened; he should continue to do bhajan.

Vishnu Bhagwan's messengers established that Ajamil was not guilty of any aparadha, but it is seen that since the time his son was named 'Narayana', he spoke the name several times every day. That did not cause prema to rise in his heart, however; nor did he stop doing things that were wrong.

Who can doubt that Yudhhishthira was a true bhakta? Yet he faced much sorrow in his life. Was that because of his prarabdha?

The reasoning is, the *naama-nare'sha* (the ruler that is Bhagwan's naam) is pleased instantly with a bhakta who has done no aparadha. Grace manifests only when the time is right. The paapas done by bhaktas due to long term habit are also nominal. They are like the bite of a snake whose fangs have been removed.

The *roga* (illness), *shoka* (grief), and *dukha* that come into the life of a bhakta are not the fruits of prarabdha. Bhagwan Himself has stated, 'I snatch away the wealth of the person on whom I wish to bestow *anugraha* (Grace). When he becomes extremely dukhi, even his relatives and associates abandon him. The great disease of poverty is a sign of My *anugraha*.'

Actually, if some thought is given to the matter, Bhagwan is *bhakta-hitakaaree* (one who always does what is good for His bhaktas). He is skilled in increasing the *deenataa* (wretchedness), *utkanthaa* (longing), etc, which is why He gives *dukha* to His bhaktas. Therefore, the *dukha* that comes into the life of a bhakta is Bhagwan's boon; it is not the fruit of the person's past deeds.

The Fourth Amritavrishti.

The two methods of *bhajana-kriyaa* (doing bhajan) was explained first. One is *anishthitaa* and the other is *nishthitaa*.

The six types of the former have been explained. The description of *anartha-nivritti* (removal of misfortune) was given without explaining the characteristics of *nishthitaa* (having implicit faith).

The reason for doing this is that the Shrimad Bhagwat describes the shravan of the *kathaa* (story; discourse) of Shri Krishna, the removal of *anartha* first, and then the *naishthikee* (having *nishtha*; implicit faith) Bhakti. It also tells us that some *anarthas* remain, because of the use of words. This is why *naishthikee bhakti* is described now.

The meaning of the word nishtha is, *nitaanta sthiti* – a state of excessiveness, *nishchalataa* – being unshakeable. Bhakti that is as stable as an unmoveable rock is called naishtiki.

So long as anarthas are not removed or greatly weakened, the complete removal of *laya* (merging), *vikshepa* (agitation), *apratipatti* (non-accomplishment), *kashaaya* (impurities), and *rasaasvaadana* (savoring the sweetness) are not possible. Because of this, Bhakti does not become unshakeable even if the person does daily rituals. When the anarthas are quieted the mental disturbances cease, and bhakti becomes stable. Thus, an absence of laya and other doshas is a sign of nishtha.

What is laya? It is to feel drowsy while doing kirtan, even more drowsy while doing shravan, and yet more drowsy when doing *smarana* (thinking about Bhagwan).

What is vikshepa? It is to mix worldly interaction while doing sadhan.

What is apratipatti? It is to become incapable of kirtan etc, in spite of not having the doshas of laya-vikshepa etc.

What is kashaya? It is the tendency for anger, greed, pride, etc.

What is rasasvadan? It is when the mana is distracted by worldly pleasures while doing kirtan

Doshas are present in the mana even after naishtiki bhakti arises, but they do not become obstacles on the path of Bhakti. This is why the word *anaaviddha* has been used in the Shrimad Bhagwat. This staunch faith, this nishtha, is incarnate in bhakti, and bhakti is also present in gross form, in objects that are favorable to it. These are of three kinds – *kaayika* (physical), *vaachika* (verbal) and *maanasika* (mental).

Some people are of the opinion that Bhakti comes in this order: physical, verbal and then mental. Acharyas are of the opinion that bhaktas have different *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions that lead to tendencies and inclinations) from previous lives that vary in physical strength, strength of the senses and mental strength. Therefore, any kind of

bhakti can rise up in a person; there is no rule about the order of bhakti rising.

The *vastu* (objects) favorable to bhakti are *amaanitva* (humility), *maanadatva* (showing respect to others), *maitree* (good-will), *dayaa* (compassion), and other *sadguna* (good tendencies). These are seen to be ripe in some *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirants) whose bhakti is not ripe, but who try hard to obtain bhakti.

Some bhaktas have a mature bhakti, but arrogance weakens their amanitva and other good tendencies. In this, the nishtha of bhakti is the primary factor. It is only when bhakti is in the heart that one can find out whether the person has true humility. The outward behavior of a person is no proof of a person's having nishtha for Bhagwan. Actually, laxity in shravan, kirtan, etc - or a strong urge for these – are signs of lack of nishtha or of having naishtiki bhakti.

The Fifth Amritavrishti.

Now the golden coin of Bhakti becomes purified by the power of the fire of practice. Bhakti begins to shine brightly in the bhakta. An intense inclination for bhakti is created in the heart of the bhakta. When shravan, kirtan etc seem more appealing than any worldly object, it is called having a *ruchi* for Bhagwan.

Once a person gets *ruchi* he feels no boredom or fatigue even after doing shravan-kirtan repeatedly. The bhakta becomes addicted to them.

A *brahmachaaree* (celebate student) works hard, studying the Shastras every day. Later, when he gets an insight of the subject, he finds it so interesting that he has to make no effort to go on studying. The condition of a person who gets addicted to the activities that connect a bhakta to Bhagwan is the same.

Pitta dosha (the fault of excessive bile) results in loss of taste; the person cannot taste the sweetness of sugar. The cure for this is to eat sugar regularly, until his sense of taste comes back, and he can enjoy sweets again. Similarly, the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and

ahankaara = the subtle pride of individuality) has become afflicted by avidya, asmita, and other doshas; and the remedy is shravan, kirtan, and other activities of Bhakti. Bhakti arises when the doshas are quieted.

This *ruchi* is of two kinds. One contains a wish for the specific factor of the *vastu* (object), and the other has no wish at all. Here, the meaning of the word *vastu* is Bhagwan's *naama* (name), *roopa* (appearance; form), *leelaa* (frolics), *guna* (qualities), etc.

In this, to desire the *vishe'sha* (specific; particular) is wanting kirtan to be well-sung, for the *kathaa* (discourse) to be learned and eloquent, with the speaker having a mellifluous voice, etc. The person gives importance to the one he serves being superior, the place of worship being a superior place, etc. His bhakti is conditional, wanting superior qualities.

Such conditional interest is a sign of a lower level of bhakti. It is a dosha of the *antahkarana* to desire something special in kirtan etc. When a bhakta delights in hearing Bhagwan's naam, about His gunas, roop, leela, *dhaama* (place where He lived during His Avatar) etc, regardless of other factors, it is a sign of intense bhakti.

When a bhakta has *ruchi* for Bhagwan's naam, kirtan, katha, etc regardless of any special quality his bhakti becomes very ripe indeed when these methods are of a superior quality. Intense *ruchi* has no inclination to look for faults.

After that, the person says, 'O my friend! Why are you drawing me away from the *amrita* (nectar) of Shri Krishna's naam, towards worldly matters like earning wealth etc? What am I to say to you? Shame on me! I am vile! I have forgotten the priceless gem I obtained by the Grace of my Gurudev. I wandered aimlessly for long. I wasted time in endless, meaningless worldly activities, in hope of a *mithyaa* (false; transient) sukha.

I did not accept any *anga* (part) of Bhakti into my life. This shows my weakness. Alas! Alas! It is the same I and the same tongue of mine that savored inane gossip and bitter worldly talk, remaining turned away from Bhagwan's naam, gunas and katha.

Drowsiness overcame me as soon as Bhagwan's katha started, but I became alert at the mention of worldly topics. I defiled the gathering of those who were genuine seekers of Bhagwan. I committed so many wrong deeds for the sake of this stomach of mine that is never filled for long. Who knows which Narak (Hell) I will have to go to, as a result of my sins!

When the thoughts of a bhakta who is moving towards *ruchi* move in this direction *nirve`da* (disregard for worldly objects) becomes predominant in his mind. He starts to remain in solitude, enjoying solitude. The fruit of the creeper of Vedanta is to savor thoughts about the amrita of the stories of Bhagwan's Avatars. The bhakta starts to praise Bhagwan repeatedly with great reverence. He develops an inclination to serve Bhagwan all the time, in whichever way he can. He becomes engrossed in Bhagwan, but people think he is absent-minded.

It is as though the bhakta wants to learn about the anand of bhajan from bhaktas. *Ruchi* catches hold of him and teaches his heart to dance with love for Bhagwan. He experiences such immense pleasure that he wonders what he will feel when his heart gets filled with *prema* for Bhagwan!

The Sixth Amritavrishti.

The *ruchi* described in the fifth amritavrishti becomes very ripe when Bhagwan becomes its object. It is then called '*asakti*'. This *asakti* is the bud of the creeper called '*Bhakti*'. It quickly gives the fruit of *bhaava* (deep love) and the fruit of *prema*. People say that when a person gets *ruchi* for Bhagwan and *asakti* for Him, each is the *vishaya* (object of the senses) of the other. It is called *ruchi* when it matures and *asakti* when it is not fully ripe.

Asakti cleans and polishes the mirror of the *antahkarana* so that a reflection of Bhagwan suddenly appears in it. It seems as though the bhakta is having a *darshana* (vision) of Bhagwan.

In the stage before *bhakti*, a bhakta observes his *chitta* (mental inclination) straying towards worldly objects, and immediately channels it towards Bhagwan. He makes a *sankalpa* (mental resolve) to focus only on Bhagwan. His *mana* mostly gets immersed in Bhagwan's *roop*, *guna*, etc. However,

when he gets *asakti* there is no need for any effort or resolve to be made, since his *mana* is immersed naturally in Bhagwan.

When a person first steps on the path of Bhakti his *mana* slips away to worldly matters while he is doing bhajan without his even realizing it. In the same way when he gets *asakti* his *mana* slips away from the external world and gets engrossed in Bhagwan's roop, gunas, leelas etc. This state of *asakti* can only be experienced by a person who is *aasakta* (has *asakti*). An *anaasakta* (one without *asakti*) cannot understand it.

Such a bhakta generally perceives that everyone has bhakti for Bhagwan. A bhaktaji saw someone coming towards him early morning. He called out, 'Oh, your throat has a hollow shaped like the Shaligram Shila. Your tongue savors Shri Krishna's naam every moment. Just the sight of you encourages a person like me to do Bhagwan's bhajans, and get prema for Bhagwan. Please tell me which *teertha* (holy places) you have visited, and whose darshan you got. What experiences, related to Bhagwan, did you have? I am blessed! You make me and the whole world fulfilled.'

A bhakta greets the person on the road as walks on. He sees someone else and says, 'Oh, from your dress, and the book you carry under your arm, it seems you are very learned. Please recite a shloka from the tenth canto of the Bhagwat. Please fill my heart with the nectarine sweetness of its meaning.' The bhakta's body tingles with the descriptions of Bhagwan.

Then, the bhaktaraj goes in another direction. He sees a *sabhaa* (essembly; conference) and says, 'Oh, this Sabha will destroy all my wrong deeds!' He prostrates before the learned Chairperson. When welcomed with respect, bhaktaji feels embarresed and sits down quietly. 'You are a gem amongst those who cure the ailment of worldliness. You bestow life to the three worlds. I am a lowly person; please feel my pulse and remove my disease. Tell me which medicines I should take. Please use some great alchemy to nurture my inner growth, and fulfill my longing for Bhagwan.' Tears flow from his eyes. He stays there for a few days and moves on.

Immeresed in anand, the bhakta wanders around and comes to a forest. He sees a black buck and thinks, 'If Shri Krishna is pleased with me let this deer take a step or two towards me. If not, let him turn his back to me and go

away.’ He mentally creates signs of Bhagwan being pleased or displeased with him. He feels sukhi when he imagines that Bhagwan is pleased and dukhi when he feels Bhagwan is displeased. All his thoughts and feelings are connected to Bhagwan.

Bhaktaji comes to a village. He watches young Brahmin boys at play. ‘Oh,’ he thinks, ‘could they possibly be the four brothers called the Sanat Kumars?’ He goes forth and asks respectfully, ‘Please tell me: when will I obtain the son of the King of Vraja?’ The boys say whatever comes to their mind, or say nothing. He imagines that they are either very wise or they are ignorant. He becomes happy or agitated accordingly.

At times the bhakta sits in his own home. Like a miserly trader he thinks, ‘Where should I go? What should I do? What will bring me my coveted object?’ Thus, he looks dejected at times. Sometimes he worries; at times he sleeps, gets up, or sits wondering what he should do.

Relatives ask him, ‘My brother, what has happened to you?’ He offers no answer. At times he hides his feelings. ‘Oh, nothing!’ he replies. His relatives and associates say, ‘He seems to be in a daze.’ Neighbors say, ‘He has become dull.’ Others say, ‘He is a fool!’ Vedantis say, ‘He is *bhraanta* (deluded).’ *Karmee* (people who undertake daily rituals) say, ‘He has become *bhrashta* (contaminated by neglecting his daily rituals), and bhaktas say, ‘He has obtained the most priceless treasure.’

However, the *aparaadhee* (people who commit an effence) say, ‘He is a hypocrite.’ A bhakta has no thought of *maana-apamaana* (honor-dishonor) whatsoever. He wallows in the flow of the holy river of *bhagavadaasakti* (asakti for Bhagwan). The fact is Bhagwan’s asakti revels in the heart of a bhakta.

The Seventh Amritavishti.

When this asakti reaches its highest state it is called *rati* or *bhaava*. This bhava is the sprouting form of Bhagwan’s shaktis that are filled with His essence of *sacchidaananda* (Sat = pure existence, Chit = pure consciousness, and Anand = pure bliss). This is called the Bhakti creeper’s state of being in full-bloom. Even its external beauty is something not easily

obtained by even the Devtas. The internal beauty is such that even Moksha (liberation from rebirth) pales beside it. Just an iota of this bhava destroys *tama* (the darkness of ignorance), whereas the fragrance of its full bloom state entices Shri Krishna – destroyer of the demon Madhu (who represents worldly attachments) – towards the bhakta. This bhakti has the capacity to reveal Shri Krishna to the bhakta.

This bhava pervades every fleeting thought and mental inclination of the bhakta, softening his heart and making it suitable for loving every part of Bhagwan. As soon as this bhava arises it makes even a lowly person who eats dog meat as worthy of honor as Brahmaji or Shankar Bhagwan.

The light of this bhava enables the eyes of the bhakta to see the exquisite beauty of Bhagwan's features, His blue-hued form, lips, His eyes, with the corners reddened with His love for His bhaktas, His smile that is like radiant moonlight, and the magnificence of His golden yellow garmets. The bhakta is filled with *rasa* (sweet emotion; love). He yearns to meet Bhagwan. Tears of love flow down his cheeks, drenching his clothes.

As soon as this bhava rises, the bhakta gets immersed every moment and in every place, in the sweet notes of Shri Krishna's flute, the alluring tinkling of His anklets, the command to serve Him. The scenes of His leelas appear before his eyes.

'Oh, how soothing is the touch of His hand,' he says, as though he has actually felt Bhagwan touch him. The bhakta's body tingles with love for Bhagwan. His nostrils quiver as if he is savoring the divine fragrance of Bhagwan's body. The bhakta blossoms with joy. He breathes deeply, recognising the indications of Bhagwan's presence.

At times, the bhakta's tongue thinks, 'Oh, when will I get the taste of His *adharaamrita* (the nectar of His lips)?' Then, the bhakta's tongue licks his lips, as though getting a taste of Bhagwan's lips.

At times the heart pulsates joyfully as though it has obtained Bhagwan. It gets intoxicated on Bhagwan's sublime sweetness, and then it is seized with acute anguish at the thought that Bhagwan has vanished.

Sometimes, the bhakta gets the feeling that he is feeding Bhagwan. He swings between different moods, all related to Bhagwan.

The buddhi reaches a firm conviction that this is the only indestructible *paramaārtha* (supreme goal). The bhakta decides to think only about Bhagwan in all three states of *jagrita* (waking), *svapna* (dreaming) and *sushupti* (deep sleep).

A subtle body that is of use in the service of Bhagwan is created, in which *ahamtaa* (pride of individuality) is removed gradually. The bhakta wants to hide his bhava the way a miser wants to hide a precious gem from prying eyes.

After that, good tendencies like *shaanti* (inner peace) and *vairaagya* (detachment for worldly matters) etc come into the bhakta's life, and become stable. This is why he comes to be known as being one among the Sadhus (people who have surrendered their lives to Bhagwan). This is natural because of the radiance of his brow. People think he is either crazed or inebriated; they fail to understand his inner state.

This bhava is of two kinds. One that has risen from *raagaa-bhakti* (loving bhakti) and the other is *vaidhee bhakti* (bhakti that starts with the traditional worship of an image). In the bhakti dominated by raaga the emphasis is on the *jaati* (the kind of form – Vishnu Bhagwan or Shankar Bhagwan), and the other is the kind of Bhakti Kabir had, for the formless Ishwara, and on the *pramaana* (proof established by Puranas and Vedas). The love of this kind of bhaktas is very deep and solid.

The bhava of the vaidhee bhakti is somewhat weak in the beginning. The bhakta's *mamataa* (partiality; possessive love) is pierced by the knowledge of Bhagwan's glory and majesty, and so it is not as solid as the bhakti dominated by raaga.

Both kinds of bhava arise in the heart of the bhakta with *maadhurya* (sweetness), and are savored according to the desire in his heart. Just as sweetness is one in mangoes, grapes, sugar cane, etc but it becomes the cause of different flavours, this bhava is savored in different ways.

Bhaktas are of five types, depending on the kind of bhava they have. The *shaanta* Bhava is for the bhakta who is content to only love Bhagwan. The *daasya bhaava* (love of a faithful servant) is for the bhakta who wants to serve Bhagwan. The *sakhaa bhaava* (the love of a staunch friend) is the love of a close friend. The *vaatsalya bhaava* (love of a parent) is for the bhakta who feels a motherly love for Bhagwan, and the *maadhurya bhaava* is the romantic love of a bhakta who considers Bhagwan to be the Beloved.

These differences are only in name. The bhavas become transformed by their own power into vibhav, anubhav, vyabhichari and sanchari. Then the bhava is awakened by Prakriti – the Ishwara’s power of Creation; Nature, and becomes firmly established like the Atma, or like a Monarch. It merges into the special feeling and becomes a shanta rasa, dasya rasa, sakhya rasa, vatsalya rasa, and ujval rasa. These are the names of the five rasas that manifest.

Shruti Bhagwati (the verses of the Vedas that are revered like a Goddess) has described it as ‘*raso vai sah*’ – this rasa is the Brahman. It is about this that the Upanishad says:

Rasam hye`vaayam labdhvaanandee bhavati.

A *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) becomes anand as soon as he obtains this rasa.

This rasa is possible in other Avatars, but it attains fulfillment in the Krishna Avatar. Lakes, ponds, rivers and streams are all called *jalanidhi* (storehouses of water) but the true jalanidhi is the ocean. It is the same with the bhava or rasa. It takes on a form as soon as the first stage of the bhava – or rasa – arises. It stabilises in the bhakta and then the bhakta is able to experience Bhagwan’s proximity.

The Eighth Amritavrishti.

It has already been stated that the creeper of Bhakti gives out two shoots of sadhana. Now, more new leaves sprout that appear even more beautiful, in the forms of shravan, kirtan, etc. *bhaava-sumana* (flowers of sweet emotion) are included in these. They are called *anubhaava*. They appear

suddenly, giving out a radiance that instantly transforms the flowers into fruits.

Every movement of this *bhakti-vallee* (creeper of Bhakti) is wonderful, because its leaves, buds, flowers and fruits all remain unchanged even after they ripen. They retain their beautiful forms simultaneously.

After that, the mana of the bhakta that earlier identified with the body, relatives, house, wealth, etc – and was bound by the fetters of partiality – turns completely towards prema for Bhagwan. The mere touch of this prema rasa makes all the *vritti* (mental inclinations) of *maayaa* (the Ishwara's power of illusion) become the form of effulgence that is conscious. Prema binds all inclinations with Bhagwan's form, name, qualities, and sweetness.

Just as the sun dispels darkness as it rises, this prema makes all worldly goals disappear even before it rises. When the bhakta starts getting a taste of this prema, the prema becomes so solid and strong that it attracts Shri Krishna. The full power of this prema is called *shreekrishna-aakarshinee shakti* (the power that attracts Shri Krishna).

As soon as this prema bhakti rises in his heart, the bhakta gives no importance to obstacles. Obstacles are insignificant; the bhakta forgets even himself! His state is like that of a great warrior, or a very greedy man, or a desperate thief. If there is a hunger in this world that cannot be satisfied by a huge feast, it can be compared to the yearning of a bhakta for Bhagwan.

This is the kind of *utkanthaa* (longing) by which prema gives deep satisfaction to the mana of the *pre`mee* (one who has prema). It instantly shows him Bhagwan's *roopa* (beauty), *guna* (good qualities), and infinite sweetness. These become the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) that the bhakta savors. The bhakta's hriday is filled with the soothing coolness and delight of the radiance of a million full moons. This prema is wonderful. It simultaneously fills the bhakta's hriday with yearning for Bhagwan, and also His indescribable sweetness!

When this prema arises and then expands a little, the bhakta becomes restless for *bhagavat-saakshaatkaara* (a direct personal experience of Bhagwan) every moment. The fire (of yearning) becomes very strong. The bhakta is not satisfied with the occasional glimpses he gets of Bhagwan. His condition becomes such that even those closest to him seem like empty wells. His house seems to be filled with thorns. The urging of his family to eat something seems like an onslaught.

When people praise him, the bhakta finds it as painful as a snake bite. His routine duties and his very limbs become a burden. Sometimes it seems that his own body is controlled by Bhagwan. It seems that the things he was once fond of are the cause of trouble. At times, *bhagavat-chintana* (thinking about Bhagwan) seems self-destructive.

After this, the prema in the heart of the bhakta becomes a magnet that pulls Shri Krishna towards him. The bhakta gets a vision of Shri Krishna. Bhagwan manifests before the bhakta and fills his senses with His sublime beauty, divine fragrance, sweet voice, tenderness, sweetness, magnanimity, compassion, Grace, etc.

When these attributes become more pronounced with every passing moment, the bhakta's longing also becomes stronger until he is filled with unspeakable bliss.

There is nothing in the world that can describe the intense joy of the bhakta, but it is compared to an exhausted traveler who is dying of thirst in a desert getting the cool shade of trees and cool water of an oasis, or a starving man getting food. Neither of these is adequate to show the intense happiness a bhakta feels when he gets Bhagwan's darshan.

It can even be compared to the relief felt by the leader of the elephant herd who is trying to escape being burnt in a forest fire, at the sight of rain cloud that showers rain and douses the fire. Or, the ecstatic pleasure of a man who has suffered long from loss of taste, enjoying his first delicious meal at the return of the sense of taste. These are examples given to describe the feelings of a bhakta when he gets Bhagwan's darshan.

Bhagwan first grants the bhakta the overwhelming joy of a vision of His indescribable beauty. The effect is that all the senses of the bhakta and all his *vritti* (mental inclinations) converge on the eyes. The bhakta is rendered unaware of even his own body. He begins to tremble at times, and tears of joy flow from his eyes. He is on the verge of losing consciousness when Bhagwan's divine fragrance fills his nostrils. All his senses and *vrittis* get focused on his nose. Before he is overcome with ecstasy, Bhagwan speaks to him. 'My beloved bhakta, I belong to you. Don't be perturbed. Experience Me.'

The sweetness of Bhagwan's voice and His words are like nectar poured into the ears of the bhakta. All his senses rush to become the ear. Once again, just as the bhakta is about to lose consciousness, Bhagwan touches him with His lotus feet, lotus hands, and holds him close in a loving embrace.

If the bhakta has a *dasya bhava* Bhagwan touches his head with His foot, but if the bhava is a *sakhya bhava*, He clasps his hand lovingly. If it is *vatsalya bhava* Bhagwan tenderly wipes the bhakta's tears, and if the bhava is *madhurya* He embraces the bhakta.

When the bhakta with the *madhurya bhava* is close to losing consciousness Bhagwan gives him the bliss of the touch of His lips. However, He does this only to fulfill the bhakta's desire. The bhakta's state of swooning with ecstasy is as intense as the *anand* he feels. It seems as though Bhagwan feels incapable of giving *Gnan* about His superlative sweetness, and so He manifests it directly for the bhakta to experience through his five senses. At that time it seems as though *prema* itself understands Bhagwan's hint, and increases greatly. The bhakta's thirst for Bhagwan increases simultaneously.

Prema itself manifests as the *chandramaa* (full moon) and raises waves of bliss in the sea of the heart of the bhakta. It becomes the *adhide`vtaa* (presiding deity) of the bhakta's heart and gives him the capacity to simultaneously experience the sublime sweetness of His beauty, fragrance, tender touch, sweetness, and the sound of His mellifluous voice. It is accepted unanimously that a *premi bhakta's* senses all experiences Bhagwan's divine attributes simultaneously.

It should not be assumed that the mana of the bhakta is not *e`kaagra* (having a single-pointed focus) when he is in this state, or that mental restlessness disrupts the intensity of the joy, because the sense organs are all focused on Bhagwan's nectarine sweetness. This wonderful, divine, unimaginable miracle makes the *rasa-anubhooti* (experiencing the sweetness) very solid. It is utterly inappropriate to compare this experience with any sensual worldly pleasure. A bhava that cannot be defined cannot be a subject of logic.

CHARU CHINTAN.

Part II

Chapter 1.

Gnan.

'Mein' (I).

Mein knows itself as a separate individual *EEKAI* (unit). Before it lies an expanse of innumerable objects, immeasurable space, and infinite time.

Mein establishes itself as a specific form, and feels itself to be a very small entity. It is so insignificant compared to the millions of people and objects that surround it, it seems like a mere speck of dust in this world full of dust, a sliver of water amongst the millions of raindrops in a heavy shower, a tiny spark in a roaring fire, a tiny corner in the four directions, or a fleeting moment in eternity.

However, this Mein knows everything. It wants to look all round the center of its existence and attach itself to other objects, spread in all directions, and retain its identity in the uncontrolled flow of time.

This unit of Mein sees everything that is around it and desires everything. It gets distressed about the things it cannot make its own. A lack of objects makes it feel diminished. It becomes dejected if it has to stay in a corner, and frightened at the thought of losing its existence. It does not want to let go of what it has, and gets angry with anyone who deprives it of what it has. Enduring relationships make it feel happy, and it feels suffocated when it is alone. This Mein, Mein, Mein has become imprisoned in its own smallness.

Is Mein Gnan or is it a *bhrama* (false understanding)? It is both, Gnan as well as bhram. Eekai means any one among the *bahut* (many). What is *bahut*? It is the expanse of the vision of Mein. A form that comes within the vision is a *vastu* (object). Its contraction-expansion is *sthaana* (place; space), and its changing is *kaala* (time). The *gnaana-svaroop* (essence, or true form that is Gnan) is *e`ka-rasa* (unchanging). It is a bhram to impose the nature of *de`sha-kaala-vastu* (space-time-object) on our Mein.

To attach our *svabhava* (essential nature) to any other is also a bham. Less-more, unimportant-important, birth-death, *shoka-moha* (grief-deluded thinking), *bhaya* (fear), *roga* (illness), *mrityu* (death) etc are all a bham. They are not our svabhava. They are borrowed. They are inferred. They are superimpositions.

It is this bham that gives birth to desires. It gives the desire to draw close or send away, to go or to come, to live or to die. What is the root of these desires? It is the Mein that is restricted within a parameter. Had this Mein not believed itself to be established in the *sthaana* (location) of the *de`ha* (body) why would there be any fear of Narak (Hell) or desire for Swarga (Heaven), Vaikuntha (the realm of Vishnu Bhagwan) or Goloka (the realm of Shri Krishna), or the loftiest of lofty realms? Had Mein not identified with the mortal body why would there be a desire for birth or fear of death? How could it have the desire to procure or give up things, unless it considered itself to be the body? The root of desires is not Mein; it is because Mein believes itself to be a separate entity.

Mein needs the rays of individual knowledge. It wants to know about things that are far away, about the future, and about others. It wants to know more about the good and bad qualities of different objects through its ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose. Can this desire for knowledge be fulfilled through the limited capacity of the senses, or by instruments like a microscope or binoculars that extend natural faculties? All these combined gather considerable information, but this only becomes a burden for Mein. Mein cannot get satisfaction through them. A pincer can grasp other objects, but not the fingers that control it!

The rays of light illuminate everything, but do they have the capacity to illuminate the sun? The desire to know remains unfulfilled, and creates *kle`sha* (distress). Even knowledge about the Shastras, or Gnan, are not able to make Mein sukhi. It is only when they are given up that an opportunity for the natural Gnan of Mein is obtained.

Please also give your attention to the desires connected to sukha (happiness with contentment). Sukha is *anya* (something separate). It is *apraapta* (not obtained), *anyatra* (elsewhere). Then, can that Mein be one

with the *sahaja svaroopā* (essential nature of the Atma)? Mein will continue to desire, and sukha will be left behind.

If sukha is far away, or if there is delay in obtaining it, then agitation will increase. Mein cannot sit at peace within itself, and if there is no inner peace the *svaroopā* (essence; true form) of sukha will remain *vikshipta* (agitated).

In that case, what is the sukha of Mein? If Mein is not, itself, sukha, how long will a borrowed sukha last?

The desire for *sukha-samriddhi* (happiness-prosperity) rises because we believe ourselves to be *dukhi* (sorrowful) and *daridra* (impoverished). The cause of the desire to obtain Gnan is that Mein accepts a feeling of being *agnānee* (not having Gnan) in itself. The desire for longevity or immortality stems from Mein accepting that it is subject to death.

Fundamentally, accepting itself to be *dukhi*, impoverished, *agnani* and mortal, leads to the desire of the removal of these afflictions. The desire to consider sukha, prosperity, Gnan and immortality as separate from Mein, and something not yet achieved, is *avaignānika* (unscientific; not established as a fact). The cause of this is the placing of our *svabhāva* (essential nature) in other objects, and superimposing their *svabhāva* on Mein. This is why it is rooted in ignorance.

It is necessary to take a look at the way this *agnan* spreads its influence. What are the things that are necessary to keep this separate Mein alive? To tell the truth, the list of desires can never be completed. Wealth, house, clothes, family, social prestige, etc are all needed. A feeling of lacking rises in the absence of education, influence over others, satisfying food, drink, etc. Mein is distressed and irritated if it doesn't have these things. It grumbles, beats its head, blames others, and thinks about the things it doesn't have. Thus, it becomes *deena-heena-paraadheena* (pitiable-impoverished-dependent). *Ape`kshā* (expectation; need) is the mother of dependency.

However, where did this *apeksha* come from? The *aparaadha* (offence; fault) of the *eeekshā* – meaning, *darshan* (right viewpoint) – is *apeksha*.

Seeing eeksha is *upe`kshaa* (indifference; contempt). Let whatever is being said be said. Let whatever happens happen. Let whatever goes go and let whatever comes come. Dukha is not in the coming or going; it is in the wish for something to come or go. Coming-going are the *vivarta* (variables) of Sat (existence; gross matter). Perceptions belong to the Chit (consciousness), and *ullaasa* (rapture) belongs to anand (the swarup of the Atma is Sat-Chit-Anand).

Desires surround the small Mein. They overpower it and make it dance. No matter how spiritual they seem to be they belong to *apoornataa* (being incomplete). This is why it is said that a *jignaasu* (seeker of Gnan) should give up three things.

1. Wanting the physical body that is a variable of Sat, and the desire for the objects of the senses.
2. The wish to expand the self as perceived through the intellect of the Chit. This includes *yasha* (a good reputation), *poojaa-pratishthaa* (being shown respect - get public accolades), *keerti* (fame, a large dominion, etc).
3. Wanting a wife, son and other sources of pleasure and happiness, along with the desire for their long life. *Putraishanaa* means the desire for a son. *Daaraishanaa* means the desire for a wife; they are the same thing. They contain an immediate pleasure as well as the wish to live on through another form.

See these desires in another form.

1. *De`ha vaasanaa* – the desire for the physical body is that the *de`ha* (body) should be strong and healthy, fragrant and beautiful, and capable of enjoying worldly pleasures. It should be tender to the touch and the voice should be sweet. Mein wants to be *poorna* (complete) *sat-roopa* (the form of existence). It desires all these because it is bound by agnan.
2. *Shaastra vaasanaa* – the desire to know the Shastras. Because of not knowing the *poorna chit-svaroopa* (the essence that is pure consciousness) of Mein the person has a desire for the *vivarta-vishayaka gnaana* (the knowledge about the variables of objects). It wants to sharpen the intellect, know about a large variety of subjects, and acquire

knowledge about different philosophies. These are the minor forms of this desire.

3. *Loka vaasanaa* – the desire for expanding the influence of Mein. If Mein is small, how much bigger can it be made?

Pooja-pratishtha, *sammaana* (being given respect), *prashansaa* (praise), *yasha-keerti* (fame), international renown, memorials like statutes and institutions that will exist for a long time etc are desires that rise up because of agnan about the wholeness of Mein.

The central point of all three types of vasanas is the separate Mein. It is the Mein that is subject to death, bound by attachments, and afflicted by sorrow. It feels inadequate and impoverished.

This can be explained in another way. Classify your desires. There will be three sections – the wish to live, the wish to know and the wish to enjoy. Can Mein fulfill them by remaining in a *parichhinna* (separate) form? This little life is in the jaws of death. There is no limit to the things that are yet to be known. The objects of the senses are subject to change, the capacity of the senses becomes feeble, the mana loses interest in things and the intellect slows down.

That being the case how will *poornataa* (being complete) come in these things? How will the *shoka-moha-bhaya* (grief-deluded thinking-fear), the desire to expand, and the longing of many years to be fulfilled? If these are not fulfilled are we caught in dukha forever?

If that be the case, is this Mein making any effort to make the impossible possible? What is the foundation of these desires? The fact is the wish for objects perceived in other forms are given a place in the mind because of not understanding the Mein. These desires don't allow Mein to sit in peace; they push it hither and thither. The places they send Mein to are the *de`ha* (body), *indriya* (senses), inside-outside, near-far, past-future. Mine-others', and innumerable other places, where Mein goes and gets stuck.

The comfort and happiness of our own house, the Gnan-*prakaasha* (effulgence of knowledge), *sattaa-sthirataa* (existence-stability), etc remain unseen. Daily life is wasted away in visiting different restaurants to taste

different kinds of food, and paying the bills. The buddhi remains restless, the mana remains restless, and the body is tense and tired. It is essential that this *bhraanti* (false understanding) is removed.

Come, let us do the *pareekshana-sameekshana* (examination – facing) of this Mein. There is not even a moment's delay when we want to look at that, which is the closest to us. Don't wait any longer. Is the *aashraya* (refuge) of Mein some gross substance? The *jada* (matter that lacks consciousness) is known by the *che'tana* (consciousness). Had Mein not been chetan it would not be possible to know that this (body) is jada. Whether Mein was created from jada, from the *shoonya* (a vacuum), the Ishwara, or something else, or even by a combination of several substances, are imagined by the Mein that is the *prakaashaka* (illuminator) and *aadhaara* (support; foundation).

To experience our own birth is not possible. That means the experience of the creation of Mein is imagined, unsupported, and un-established. The form of Mein that is a subject of experience is not Mein, because the *aakaara* (form) is *prakaashya* (that which is illuminated or seen), whereas Mein is the *prakaashaka* – that which enables something to be seen.

No *drishya* (that, which can be perceived), or jada, or shoonya, or *paroksha* (beyond the scope of the senses) *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) or Ishwara can be the *kaarana* (cause) of Mein. Had there been a karana it would be something imagined, not experienced. So, let go of the thought of the creation of Mein, and what caused it to be created. Mein has no cause; it is not created. It is *svatah siddha* (self-established).

Very well, Mein may not have a karana but it has a *kaarya* (effect). What harm is there if we accept that the jada karya is the creation of the chetan Mein?

Everything changes, but Mein does not change. It is the *saakshee che'tana* (the consciousness that witnesses). If it has a *parinaama* (result; effect), who will know the parinam? How will the parinam be established? If it creates some other, will it be outside or inside the Mein? Will it be far or near? Which place will it be in, where the Mein creates some other?

Inside and outside, near and far, are all imagined. Imagination gathers up all measurements of space, contraction-expansion, etc in itself. Space has no beginning and no end, and therefore even the middle and the four directions are imagined. There are no real boundaries of the four directions, of the middle, beginning or end of space. That being the case the real form of space can only be a concept that is imagined.

The *aashraya* (refuge) of *de'sha* (place; space) that is in the womb of *kalpanaa* (imagination) is nothing but the ashray of kalpana. The chetan that is the *kalpanaavachhinna* (not separate from the imagination) is the *kalpita* (imagined) *de'shaavachinna* (not separate from the place). Therefore, desha cannot make the Mein that is chetan, *parichhinna* (separate). The chetan Mein is infinite. Space does not exist in any form; neither outside nor inside Mein. Where is any creation or destruction in such a Mein? Matter is perceived in perceived space, in the Mein that illuminates it. When there is no space, there can be no matter in it either. This Mein is the most vast, immense and great thing.

Very well, it is accepted that there is no *dravya* (substance) in chetan, and also that there is no *sthaana* (place) in it. But what is the harm in accepting that *kaala* (time) exists in Mein, that every unit of chetan is independent and shines every moment?

Bless you! Mein is, itself, the *drashtaa* (one who sees) of its own death! *Aгнаana* (lack of Gnan; ignorance) is attached to kaala. The *aadi* (beginning) of time is *agnaata* (not known); nor is its *anta* end known. Mein is the illuminator of kaala, unconnected to its beginning or end. Therefore, there is no agnan about it either.

The beginning of time is not known and the end of time is also unknown, because time is *pravaahee* (flowing like a stream). Consciousness – chetan – is not something that flows. Therefore, it has no beginning, middle or end. Consciousness is the illuminator of time as well as agnan. Hence, it is not connected to agnan in any way.

Time and matter are perceptions that are imagined. That, which sees the rising and dying of *kalpanaa* (imagination) is the same as that which sees the *kalpita* (things that are imagined). The consciousness that is not

separate from imagination is not separate from the things that are imagined. The imagined things are imposed on consciousness.

Mein is *avinaashee* (indestructible; eternal). The *vinaashee* (destructible; transient) objects keep glimmering and vanishing in their *adhiakaran* (technical substratum); they have no innate existence, and therefore, they are *mithyaa* (false; relative truths; transient).

The Mein, meaning the chetan Atma, is the illuminator and substratum of mithya matter, space and time. It has no beginning, no middle and no end. It is free of the past-future, external-internal, seen-unseen that are imagined in it. Nor is it that the Self requires any other. It is because of not knowing this Mein that a person gets weighed down with desires, becomes dukhi, and restricted.

It is essential to remove agnan about the *yatharth* (factual) *paramarth* (supreme goal) about this Mein.

See the frenzied rushing about undertaken for obtaining sukha, the search for things, the despair of losing them, and the anxious awaiting of things that may give you sukha. Why is this? The desha, kaala, and *vastu* (objects) that are not created are dear to you. A garland made of cloud formations cannot enhance the beauty of your neck. If your Beloved is the son of a barren woman, it is foolish to hope to unite with him.

You are turned away from your own self-established dearness, making imagined objects dear to you. Why is that? The supremely dear Mein is *saakshaat aparoksha* (known directly, without being perceived by the senses).

Why does this Mein want sukha? It desires sukha because it does not realize that it is sukha. Not knowing itself to be sukha, it seeks sukha from other sources. Please also note that no other sukha can be experienced unless it is connected to Mein. *Abhe'da* (not being separate; being one) with Mein is sukha.

If you turn away from this Mein that gives *sattaa* (existence) to sukha when you become one with it, turning towards others in the hope of getting sukha, how can you ever hope to succeed?

There is no need to go anywhere to get sukha; Mein is sukha. There is no need to procure anything; Mein is sukha. It is not even necessary to make this sukha a subject of Gnan, because Mein is *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent; known directly), *sve`tarasarvaprakaashaka* (it illuminates the Self as well as everything else) and *itaraprakaashanirape`ksha* (needing no other source of illumination).

Mein is not known through the senses like touch or sound. It is a direct personal experience, because it is our own 'I', our Atma, our Self. Mein has no *kaarya-kaarana* (effect-cause), so how can it be destroyed? It has no *aashraya-aashrita bhaava* (feeling of being a shelter - being sheltered), so it cannot be destroyed by the destruction of its ashray.

Mein is not *samaana* (equal; the same); it is not *adhika* (more), it is not the *svaamee* (master), nor the *se`vaka* (servant). It is neither a *shatru* (enemy) nor a *mitra* (friend). Who else will destroy it? It is the *paramaananda ghana* (complete and supreme happiness), *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent), *avinaashee* (eternal), *paramaarth* (supreme goal). *Dvaita* (duality) cannot touch it.

That being the case, it is absolutely inappropriate to believe that Mein is subject to death, lacking Gnan, dukhi, and *vikaaree* (subject to decay). There is no coming or going in it, no birth or death, no *paapa* (sin) or *punya* (spiritual merit), and no sukha-dukha either. How can these be related to something where there is no *parichhinnataa* (separateness; lack of oneness)? Separateness can have no existence in that, which has no scope for separateness.

Mein is not a separate unit; it is the *paripoorna* (complete in itself) Brahman. The wish for the removal of what you have, or to obtain what you don't have is caused by agnan.

There is no agnan in the Gnan-*svaroopa* (essence or form of Gnan, the Atma). That which is obtained by Gnan is already yours. Gnan does not give anything; it reveals what exists. That, which is lost by agnan is not lost; it remains intact. Gnan and agnan are not creators or destroyers of any substance; they are a process for shattering the apparent covering that hides Mein. Agnan is an *adhyaropa* (erroneous attribution); Gnan is the

apavaada (refutation). Mein is free of both Gnan and agnan. It needs no other *gnaana* (knowledge); it is Gnan-swarup. Even to call it Gnan is a process.

Whether the Mein is mine or yours or someone else's is not the question. You, I, and others are not separate. All these small units – whether they are *pratyaksha* or *paroksha* – perceived or not perceived by the senses – or *aparokha* – known, without being experienced by the senses – are meaningless in the Mein that is the direct personal experience of that Supreme Goal.

The actual Mein is Brahma-swarup – it is the essence, or true form of the Brahman. As soon as a person gets this incandescent understanding, the imagined *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the multiplicity of the world to be Satya) vanishes along with its related subjects. After that, there is no need for *bodha* (comprehensive understanding). When the *adhyaaropa* (superimposition) vanishes, *apavad* becomes redundant. There is an *avadhi* (end) even of *apavad*. This *avadhi* is the self-effulgent substratum of everything that exists. It is the non-dual, Brahma-swarup Mein.

Chapter 2.

You, Only You.

1. Do you seek to investigate the Sat (pure eternal existence), find out about it, and obtain it?

Very good. May your *sat-prayaasa* (right effort for the Sat) succeed! I want to request you to first of all have *pre`ma* (pure love) for the Sat, and understand the *lakshana* (characteristics; distinctive features) of Sat.

If someone goes to the jungle in search of a cow without having love for the cow or knowing what a cow looks like, what will be the result? He will come back tired and defeated. Even if he comes across a cow he will be unable to recognize that this is a cow. Firstly, he won't have much inclination to search for long or face hardships in his quest.

Secondly, he will fail to recognize the object of his search even if he finds it. Therefore, prema for the Sat and knowledge about its characteristics are both necessary.

2. How strong is your prema for Sat? When indulging in, or using objects and enjoying them, do you take the trouble to check whether they are Sat? While doing some work or talking to people do you favor the *sat-svaroopa* (the essence or true form of the matter)? If you are not a *pre`mee* (lover) of the Sat in *bhoga* (worldly indulgences), *sangraha* (accumulation), *bhaashana* (speech), and you do not favor Sat, how can there be an ardent desire and love in your *antahkarana* (fourfold mind composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality) for the Sat?

What I mean to say is, only a person who retains a strong love for Sat in his *vyavahaara* (interaction; behavior) can be a seeker of the *paramaarth* (supreme Goal) of Sat. Unless a person believes the side of *asat* (false; contrary to Sat) to be wrong, he can never progress towards the Sat.

3. If you do not recognize what Sat is how will you get *tripti* (deep satisfaction) or *santushti* (contentment) even when you find it? To be able to identify Sat you will have to create a dividing line between the *aatmasatya* (the Atma that is the Sat because it can never be negated) and the *anaatmasatya* (a relative truth that has a temporary existence).

When you know the characteristics of Satya you will find it is that, which can never be proved as *mithyaa* (a relative truth; a transient reality). The *kalpita* (imagined) *paroksha* (not perceived by the senses) Satya and the objects of the world that are perceived through the senses in some place or another, are proved to be *mithya* with the test of time.

The Atma-Satya is the only Satya that can never be negated under any circumstances. In the terminology of the Shastras this is called '*abaadhita*'. There is no need wait for any specific time, or *vikshe`pa-samaadhi* (disturbance - deep meditation) or *de`sha* (place; space) – within or without – or special object, or to be established in the *kaarya-*

kaarana (effect-cause), if a person wants to seek this Satya. This is the Atma-Satya. In it there is no coming or going (birth-death). There is no contraction or expansion. Nothing is to be made or marred.

The Atma-Satya just is.

4. The Atma is the *paraakaashthaa* (summit) of *priyataa* (dearness; lovability). This is established by the *shruti* (Vedic verses), *yukti* (logic), and *anubhooti* (experience). The Atma is dearer than money, son, wife, or anything else. It is for the sake of the Atma that a person has prema for others, not the other way round. The Atma is not a part of any other; it is *svayam-priya* (loved by Itself). It is this that is called *nirupaadhika pre`ma* (love that is not an attribute connected to something).

Even though the Atma is *aparoksha* (a direct personal experience, but not known through the senses) it is *agnaata* (not known). We see so many people and objects every day, without knowing them. Even a diamond looks like a piece of glass to someone who has no knowledge of diamonds. Its value is revealed only when a knowledgeable person tells us.

It is essential to recognize the fact that our *param-pre`maaspada* (dearest of all) is our Atma. The fruit of this knowledge is *vairaagya* (detachment) for other things. The investigation of the Atma is strengthened by *vairagya*.

After that, the person is not content until he obtains *aatmaanubhooti* (the experience of the Atma). *Vairagya* is the key to obtaining *dridha gnaana* (consolidated Gnan), else a person progresses a little and then faces the possibility of losing his way.

Seekers stray from their path and cease to progress. Therefore, it is essential to know that the Atma is that, which is loved the most.

5. Life is like a constantly changing stream. Birth and death are both facets of life. The Atma is the *saakshee* (witness) *amrita* (not subject to death). Not only is it the *sakshi*, it is also the Brahman. Birth and death are *anitya* (transient). This interactive life inevitably leads to an end; the Atma is *kootastha* (unchanging) and *nitya* (eternal).

Apart from being unchanging, the Atma is also *aparichhinna* (not separable). This quality of being beyond fragmentation is different from the *vibhu* (the all-pervading eternal being) who pervades all beings.

Furthermore, the matter of which it is made is the inherent *kaarya* (effect); result of a *kaarana* (cause).

Not only is the Atma free of *sansarga* (touch; union) it is also *advaita* (non-dual; indivisible). That is why when a person gets the *bodha* (incandiscant understanding) of the Atma-Satya he becomes free of the coming and going that is carried on by changing of forms, or merging with any other. Not only this, *anya* (any other) is negated completely. *Nivritti* (withdrawal from worldly activity) and *pravritti* (activity) are a *dvandva* (duality). The Atma is free of duality.

6. Do you recognize that the Satya is your own individual life, or do you want to recognize it in other forms? The Satya you recognize in other forms will be *pratyaksha* (perceived through the senses) like a *ghata* (pot, symbolizing the body) etc and will remain *vinaashee* (subject to destruction).

If the Satya is *paroksha* (not perceived by personal observation) like *prakriti* (Nature), *triguna* (the three tendencies of Sattva, Raja and Tama that influence lofty, mixed and lowly behavior), *apoorva* (the latent fruit of actions, given when the time is ripe), *paramaanu* (atoms), etc, it will also be *kalpita* (imagined).

If this Satya is *aparoksha* (a direct personal experience but not through the senses) like *svapna* (the dream state), *sushupti* (the deep sleep state), and *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion), it will be present at times and absent at times. It is not in our power to create or destroy these states.

Therefore, the Atma-Satya is neither *pratyaksha* nor *paroksha*; nor is it *aparoksha* like love, etc. It is not any specific form of *vritti* (mental inclinations) either. It is not included in the department of development! It is not *saadhya* (attained by effort); it is *svayam-siddha* (self-established). No special imagined object, form, or instrument is needed for it to be

obtained. Use *vichaara* (deep thought) to dispel *bhraanti* (erroneous understanding) and you will see that the Atma-Satya is you, your Self.

If it so happens that even after the false understanding has been removed, you experience a state of *viparyaya* (inverse reaction), give up even vichar. Establish yourself in a state where your mind is empty of all thoughts. What is desired is the direct personal experience of being the Brahman. There are no rules about vichar or lack of vichar.

7. The fact is, even *shravana* (listening to and absorbing the substance of spiritual discourses), *manana* (meditating on the object of shravan) and *nididhyasana* (bringing the mind back repeatedly to the object of meditation) do nothing in the Atma-Satya. This is also a method of the Shastras, and the traditional teaching of religious Sects for explaining the subject. To dispel a misconception of the intellect it has to be used as a treatment. It is a *he`tu* (cause) of removing illness; not used in good health. Good health is a natural state. Agnan, doubts, and inverse efforts are all to be used as needed, for them to be removed altogether. The need for treatment is also an indication of illness.

A mixture of different *vichaara* (philosophies) is used for someone who has doubts, but it is no sign of wisdom to spend the whole life in a research center! The fruit of the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) is the sakshatkara itself. It is not Samadhi, going to divine realms, getting into a frenzy of deep emotion, or attaining any particular state. The swarup of sakshatkara is to be free of fear and free of doubts under all circumstances. So much so that fearlessness and freedom from doubts is the essence of sakshatkara, not its fruit: '*Abhayam ha vai janaka praaptosi.*'

8. All right then, you wish to obtain Gnan. Gnan about whom or what? About some other or about your Self? Are you, then, *agnaana-svaroopa* (the form or essence of agnan)? You, yourself, are Gnan. Everything is illuminated by you. Nothing exists in your self-effulgent essence. Then, whose Gnan do you hope to obtain? Is it Gnan that wants to obtain Gnan? How can Gnan obtain Gnan about Gnan?

In that case, is Gnan *agne`ya* (unknowable)? Definitely, provided it is some other. Had it not been agneya, why would you want to obtain it? If Gnan is no other, if it is your Self, then where is the need to obtain it? It is easy to know because it is you, yourself. Come; recognize the *lakshana* (characteristics; distinguishing features) of the *sadaatmaa* (the Atma that is Satya), *gnaanaatmaa* (the Atma that is Gnan), *aanandaatmaa* (the Atma that is anand) and *aparichhinna* (not separable). This characteristic is also *vilakshana* (beyond all lakshans; wonderful). Discerning people know it in the form of the Atma that illuminates every moment and every grain, as the substratum of all that exists, and the illuminator of all.

9. The Charvaks believe Gnan to be the *vikaara* (distortion) of *jada dravya* (inert matter). The *aadi* (beginning) and *anta* (end) of Gnan is *jada dravya*. Gnan is born and it is destroyed. Is this logical? None of these – *jada dravya*, *vikar*, *aadi-anta* (origin –end) – can be established without Gnan. It is like going in search of Gnan and coming back with agnan.

Great thinkers have accepted that Gnan is the *aashraya* (refuge) of expansion and contraction, coming and going, and other *kriyaa* (actions).

Even in the *siddha dashaa* (fulfilled state) it is established on the tip of the *alokaakaasha* (space in the other world) in the form of a separate entity. This Gnan is dependent on *de`sha* (space) and is subject to expansion and contraction and destruction. It is also connected to the *antahkarana* (the fourfold mind composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality). It is not actual Gnan.

The Buddhists believe Gnan to rise and set in the jaws of time. The stream of *vaasanaa* (avid desires) for unending trifles continues to in an unbroken flow, but Gnan keeps getting dulled. Their belief, that Gnan is *vinaashee* (subject to destruction) resulted in their becoming subject to destruction as well. They came to the conclusion that *shoonya* (emptiness; a vacuum) is the ultimate reality.

The followers of Akshapada and Kanad made Gnan a *guna* (attribute; tendency). Poor Gnan comes into consciousness at times, and becomes

unconscious at times! The Gnani (one who has Gnan) becomes an *agnaanee* (one who lacks Gnan), and the *vilaasa* (sport) of agnan becomes joyful in the form of Gnan.

The followers of Kapil and Patanjali did separate the Gnan of the *asanga* (unattached) Atma from the *vritti-gnaana* (the Gnan of the mental inclinations), but pushed it into a cave. Whenever it comes into *vyavahaara* (interaction) it becomes sullied by the vritti, and apart from the state of Samadhi, it remains identified with the vrittis. There is no sign of pure Gnan; the Gnan that is free of the divisions of *gnaana* (knowledge), *gnaataa* (knower) and the *gne`ya* (known).

Somebody made Gnan an adjective of the Ishwara, and somebody else made it dependent on the Ishwara. What I mean to say is that the characteristic of *shuddha* (pure) Gnan continued to be covered up.

What is the *tattva* (essence; true form) of the Gnan you seek? After rejecting the *ahamansha* (the part that is the 'Aham', the individual 'I') and the *idamansha* (the part that is the 'idam', the 'other') there is no scope for *de`sha* (space), *kaala* (time), *dravya* (matter), *avasthaa* (state), *vishe`shana* (adjectives), or *paratantrataa* (dependency) in Gnan.

10. Is Gnan about the *sva* (Self) or about *anya* (another)? If Gnan is about something else, and if that object is something excellent, a desire to obtain it will be inevitable. If the object is inferior, a desire to be rid of it will be inevitable as well.

If the Gnan is about the *sva* you will have to become free of all that is *anya*, and be established in the *sva*.

The purport of this is that when your goal is something that is not your Self, a *dhaarmika* (religious) activity will be successful in your obtaining it. If your goal is your Self, however, *dhyaana* (meditation) and Samadhi will be the *nivritti* (withdrawing from worldly activities) that is needed.

The pravritti and nivritti are the effect of the knowledge that *sva* and *anya* are not separate. *Bhe`da* (differences; separateness) is itself *prakaashya* (that, which is seen); it is not the *prakaashaka* (that which shows). Therefore, *bheda* is not *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent).

This is the Gnan that is *shuddha prakaasha* (pure effulgence), in which there is no difference between *sva* and *anya*; between the self and another. So, Gnan is not the creator of activity or inactivity. The *mahaa-vaakya* (ultimate statement of the Vedas that affirms the oneness of the Atma and the non-dual Brahman as being the substratum of all that exists) like *Tattvamasi*, remove the imagined covering of agnan. Then it becomes evident that the Atma is itself, *aparichhinna* (not separate) and *advaita* (non-dual).

The awareness of *bheda* is not destroyed when the *aavarana-bhanga* (breaking of the imagined covering of agnan) happens. It is only the *bhraanti* (erroneous understanding) of *bheda* that is removed. Awareness is *gnaana-svaroopa* (the essence, or form, of Gnan), and therefore, it remains *abhe`da* (not separate) even when it shows the *bheda*.

This is why a person who has obtained Tattvagnan has no *kartavya* (duty; obligation) of *pravritti-nivritti*. This Gnan is not created by *karma-upaasanaa* (religious rituals-loving worship), nor any *kartavya*. The feelings of creator-creation are agnan, so even though they appear to be real they are negated in our self-effulgent swarup.

11. It is not necessary to make Gnan the *gne`ya* (that, which is known) for shattering the imagined covering of agnan, because there is no *pramaana* (proof; establishing factor) like *pratyaksha-anumaana* (direct observation – estimation) that can make Gnan something that can be known. The effulgence that shows praman – and is the witness and illuminator of the buddhi etc – cannot be proved to be that, which is proved.

Praman and *prame`ya* (that, which is proved), and the proving connected to them, are all three revealed by the effulgence of Gnan. This is the triad of the state based on agnan. In this, the *paramaarth*a (supreme goal) form of the *pramaataa* (the one who proves) is factual; the triad is negated.

Thus the *vritti* (mental inclination) that rises through Mahavakyas like Tattvamasi is that of the *aikya-bodha* (the comprehensive understanding

of the oneness). It is the praman in the form of removing *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the multiplicity to be an eternal truth). It does not make Gnan the gneya.

The vritti being the proof is also *agnaanika vyavahaara* (interaction in a state of agnan), because it is seen in social interaction that the Gnan of a *paroksha vastu* (an object not perceived by the senses) like Swarga is obtained only by *vaakya* (words; statements), not by *pratyaksha* (direct observation) or *anumaana* (estimation).

Similarly, if some object is *nitya aparoksha* (always experienced, but not through the senses), and yet not known, then the agnan about it will be removed only by the vakya praman.

If you observe a person or object with your eyes or any other sense organ, but you don't know the name – or, if it is a gem that may be a diamond or ruby – the agnan is removed by vakya-praman. This is the vakya-praman vritti – the mental inclination created by verbal proof. Vritti means *vyavahaara* (interaction; behavior).

The Atma is *nitya aparoksha*. It is our own Self, but we are not conscious that it is *anashvara* (indestructible; everlasting), *poorna* (complete in itself), *aparichhinna* (not subject to fragmentation), *adviteeya* (indivisible), *agnata* (not known), and *aparichita* (not recognized). Vakya-gnan is the only method by which this ignorance can be removed.

The vakya should be free of the influences of *karma* (actions), *bhoga* (worldly pleasures), *gamaanaagamana* (coming and going into or from different realms), *vinaasha* (destruction), *priya-apriya* (desirable-undesirable) and other dualities. It should also be free of the restriction of separateness. It may be spoken in any language, but it must be the remover of erroneous understanding and duality.

If our oneness with the Paramatma is based on *bhaava* (feeling; love) only, the bhava will break one day. If it is based on Samadhi and sustained as long as we are established in our swarup, it will be destroyed as soon as we come out of the Samadhi. Tattvagnan is not obtained with any other, or to oneself. It detaches our Self from the

‘other’ and sits established in itself. It has no urge to take us anywhere or make us sit in our Self. It is only the bodha of the *yatharthā sthiti* (actual state). Even in the state of agnan the Atma is the Brahman; in the state of Gnan it is obviously the Brahman!

The vritti created by the Mahavakya removes the lid that covers this Satya. Neither is the vritti factual nor is the lid real. The vastu is the Gnan-swarup Atma, and it is you, only you.

Chapter 3.
Jignasa And Samadhan.
(Questions and Answers)

1.

Question: Why is *bhagavatbhakti* (bhakti for Bhagwan) called *parama-prakaasha-roopaa* (the form of supreme effulgence)? Why is there no need for *japa* (ritual chanting), *tapa* (severe asceticism) etc in bhakti? How can bhakti be obtained?

Answer: Bhagwan Himself is param-prakash – ‘*parama prakaasha roopa bhagavaanaa*’, ‘*saba kara parama prakaashaka jyoti*’, etc. When no other object except Bhagwan remains in the *bhakti-vritti* (the mental inclination of bhakti), then bhakti becomes *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent; needing no other source of illumination). Bhakti’s *abhe`da* (not being separate; oneness) with Bhagwan is its form of param prakash roop. This is why bhakti is also called chintamani – a wish-fulfilling gem.

Japa, tapa etc are done by an effort of the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual). Actually, these are also by the Ishwara’s *anugraha* (Grace; compassion), but the jeeva does not know this. When the jeeva does japa, tapa etc with pride, believing himself to be the doer, he does not obtain the bhakti-chintamani.

The *naama* (Bhagwan’s name) is the rainy season. It gives birth to the grain of bhakti. The unbroken flow of *smriti* (thinking about Bhagwan) is the *gangaajala* (water of the holy Ganga) that waters it. *Bhagavadaakaara vritti* (the mental inclination for the form of Bhagwan) is the bhakti chintamani. Bhagwan is already seated in the heart from before; He manifests when the person’s thoughts are focused constantly on Him. That is *svayam-prakaash* (Bhagwan being self-effulgent).

What is the *sadhana* (method) for this? It is to turn towards Bhagwan, and await His *anugraha*. *Sameekshaa* (facing; seeing something) is even more important than *prateekshaa* (waiting). See His *kripa* (Grace, compassion) in every moment and in every grain.

Question: Where is Bhagwan's eternally effulgent *dhaama* (realm) that is free of *punaraavritti* (rebirth)?

Answer: Bhagwan's dhaam is where He is. Bhagwan is in your *hridaya* (heart), and therefore, your hriday is Bhagwan's dhaam.

Bhagwan is everywhere; everywhere is Bhagwan's dhaam. Sridhar Swami has stated, '*Svadhaama hridayam*'. The methods for obtaining this is to restrain the senses, maintain silence, and obtain the things that are connected to Bhagwan. Its swarup is *anubhooti* (experience).

Question: When Bhagwan can't be seen by these eyes of ours, why do people go to the Mandir? Whose *darshan* (to see with reverence) do they hope to get? What are the *divya ne'tra* (divine eyes) by which a person can get Bhagwan's darshan?

Answer: The episode in the Gita where Arjuna says he can't see Bhagwan with these eyes is the episode of the darshan of Bhagwan's *viraata* (universal) form. How can these small eyes see the Virat? They can't even see up to a mile or two, nor can they see atoms and microbes. The divya netra needed for the darshan of Bhagwan's Virat form means that a mind that has a single-pointed focus is essential.

This episode mentions Bhagwan's two-armed and four-armed forms. '*Te'naiva roope'na chaturbhuje'na*' (Your four-armed form), and '*Drishtve'dam maanusham roopam*' (show me Your human form with two arms). These forms are seen with our normal eyes. Up to now many bhaktas have had Bhagwan's darshan, both in ancient times and modern times. Even today there are many bhaktas living who get Bhagwan's darshan with these very eyes.

I ask you to do the darshan of Bhagwan's *moorti* (image) in the Mandir with *shraddhaa* (faith) and bhakti. The images are also a part of the Virat. When your *bhaava* (feeling; love) becomes ripe, you can get Bhagwan's darshan by His Grace, with these very eyes. This is not merely an opinion or conviction; it is *svaanubhooti* (a personal experience).

Question: How will the *mana* (emotional mind) become *pavitra* (pure), since the mana is within, and the rituals of *poojaa* (worship) etc are external?

Answer: It is the external objects that shine in the mana and make it impure. Therefore, when a connection is established with external things that are pavitra they shine in the mana and make it pavitra.

When pavitra objects spring forth in the mana, it is the *pavitrataa* (purity) of the mana; and when impure things spring up in the mana it is the impurity of the mana. The mana is neither pure nor impure in itself. It is *gnaana-svaroopaa* (the essence, or form, of the knowledge in it). It neither goes anywhere nor does anything come into it. The connection with *anya* (another) is based on *bhrama* (erroneous understanding).

If you are connected to the bad, develop a connection with the good. This is *japa-tapa* (ritual chanting – asceticism). If you have no connection with the *anya*, you don't need to do anything. *Sanskriti* (refinement; culture) is for removing *vikriti* (mental distortion). The *svaroopaa* (essence of the Atma) is free of both.

Question: Which is a simple and certain method for obtaining Gnan?

Answer: By Gnan I presume you mean *brahmagnaana* (Gnan about the Brahman). The *saadhana* (method) for Brahmagnan cannot be *aindriyaka* (of the senses) Gnan, *maanasa dhyana* (mental meditation), or *baudhika vichaara* (intellectual effort), because it is not possible for any of these to have a *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the *advaya* (non-dual) Atma-chaitanya – the Atma that is pure consciousness; the Brahman. The Brahman cannot be perceived by any of them; nor is it an object they can perceive.

It is only through *brahma-vidyaa* (knowledge about the Brahman) that the Brahman can be *aaroodha* (sitting astride) the *vritti* (mental inclinations). Brahmavidya is the teaching that makes the Upanishads, *paraa-vidyaa* (knowledge that is beyond worldly knowledge), the Atma and the Brahman one. The language is immaterial. It does not matter who gives the teaching, or the place or time of the teaching. The important factor is that it must have the capacity to create the *akhandaartha dheer* (the intellect that contains the eternal supreme Gnan). This *vritti* is the evident method of obtaining Brahmagnan. All other methods are of *saadhans* that have been handed down in an unbroken line of tradition from Guru to disciple.

As far as a simple method is concerned, a person should be prepared for the most difficult method, if his goal is truly the one that is the highest. '*Mein bauree dhoondhana chalee, rahi kinaare` baitha`*' (I was stupid; I set out to find Bhagwan but wasted my life sitting beside the river). This should not be the case. It shows that there is no real longing to attain your goal.

Seen from another viewpoint, it is extremely difficult to get that, which is very far removed from any place, time and matter. The Atma-Brahman is *nitya-prapta* (always with you). No *shrama* (effort) is needed to obtain it; only *bhraanti* (erroneous understanding) has to be removed.

Question: Please tell us the characteristics of a Gnani (one who has Gnan), and about his state.

Answer: A Gnani is the swarup of Gnan. He is not an *abhimaanee* (one who has the pride of having Gnan) of Gnan, meaning, he doesn't feel he is a Gnani. It is the Gnan-swarup Atma that he experiences in all.

A Gnani is not an individual with any specific characteristics; he is the Brahman.

Regarding how a *jignaasu* (seeker of Gnan) can recognize a Gnani, the person must first have *shraddhaa* (faith). A person who can completely remove his agnan is a Gnani. Once agnan is removed, the jignasu and the Gnani are one. The special and the ordinary are both negated. Only our swarup is *abaadhita* (beyond negation).

Whatever be the state of a Gnani in the eyes of others, he is always established in his Self.

Question: How is it possible that a person remains unaware of his body while still living, and remains unattached while living in this world of interaction?

Answer: The swarup of a Gnani is '*bhaana-maatra abaadhita bhaasamaana`*'. The body is *bhaasamaana* – it is perceived. It is the same with the *vyavahaara* (interaction; behavior) of the *shareera* (body). It is *mithyaa* (a relative truth that has no permanent existence) from the viewpoint of Gnan. Where is the question of *aasakti* (strong attachment) for that, which is nothing more than a perception? Does anyone have *aasakti* for the blueness of the sky, or the silver that gleams in mother-of-pearl? The objects that we perceive are not the cause

of the aasakti; the cause of aasakti is the faulty understanding that they are real and permanent.

It is also worth considering whether aversion for aasakti should be so strong that the person gives up the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the real Satya that is the Atma being the Brahman! If aasakti is present, let it be dismissed as the insignificant offspring of something that crops up in the mind, which is to be negated. You are the Satya and you are *e`karasa* (unchanging).

Question: How can one experience the moment that connects *sushupti* (the deep sleep state) with the *jaagrita* (waking state), or the moment in-between two *vritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts)?

Answer: You are the *drashtaa* (one who sees) of both states and both vrittis, and the moment that connects them. You are the *tatastha-kootastha* (impartial-unaffected) *che`tana* (consciousness).

There is no need for you to go anywhere or do anything. You see these; continue to see them. The word continue is related to time, but you are the drashta of time as well. The *drishya* (that, which is seen) is nothing; the *drishti* (vision; viewpoint) is important. The word drishti leads to a result or a relationship, but these are nothing either. Only the *drig-maatra* (consciousness that sees) exists. Even to say this is only for concealing. In the Tattva (essence of the ultimate reality) there is no *anuvritti* (following) or covering either.

Question: Which is the better method for getting bhakti, or obtaining Bhagwan – to recite shlokas that eulogize Bhagwan, or do *dhyana* (meditation)?

Answer: *Japa* (ritual chanting) is more useful for dhyana, because it entails repeating one name and one *bhaava* (feeling). If the *paatha* (reciting verses that eulogize Bhagwan) is done with an understanding of its meaning, it increases Gnan.

When a person obtains Gnan about the *saguna* (with attributes) Ishwara, his bhakti increases. Gnan about the *nirguna* (without attributes) Brahman, the understanding about the Tattva (essence of the Brahman) is increased. If paatha is done without understanding, the person gets *punya* (spiritual merit).

Six things about paatha should be kept in mind.

1. The paatha should not be sung.
2. The paatha should not be done hurriedly.
3. The head should not move to the rhythm.
4. The paatha should not be written by oneself.
5. The effort to understand it should not wane.
6. The paatha should not be mental; to speak the paatha is a *kriyaa* (action) of the *vaikharee vaanee* (the faculty of speech).

Dhyana is also done with the support of *shabda* (sound; words). The *vritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts) that draw the *mana* (emotional mind) away from other objects and makes it focus on the *ishta* (desired object) will surely have a special name for the Ishta in order to stop the mana from straying. It is not possible for the vritti to keep coming back to the Ishta unless the Ishta has a name, and dhyana will be impossible. There is no vritti in which the word that creates a vibration is not inducted. The repeating of one word, and the vritti for that form, are needed for this. *Vandanaa* (eulogizing Bhagwan) leads to the rising of awareness about the greatness of the Ishta and the raises humility in the heart.

Question: Which is greater – *gnaanabala* (the strength of Gnan) or *yogabala* (the strength of Yoga, meaning the eight steps to self-realization)?

Answer: Yogabala contains *aatmabala* (the strength of the Self) and *siddhi* (supernatural powers). If the person is *nishkaama* (free of worldly desires) he becomes *antar-mukha* (turned inwards) and attains Samadhi. He obtains the capacity to make changes in matter. He can also remove *de`ree* (delay) and *dooree* (distance). Yoga is a *vyavahaarika* (of interaction) strength. In Bhakti all the strength is the Ishwara's.

The only ability Gnan has is to remove *agnaana* (lack of Gnan). It has not *vyavahaarika bala* (interactive power). Yoga and Bhakti can turn brass into gold. Gnan, however, can destroy the *bhrama* (false understanding) that makes a person believe brass to be gold, and gold to be brass. To believe the *adviteeya paramaarthata* (the essence of the non-dual supreme goal), the Ishwara, to be separate in the forms of the *jeeva* (Atma attached

to a body; an individual) and the *jagata* (world) is a bhram. Factual Gnan removes bhram.

Question: Why can't we see the *antar-jyoti* (inner light) even if we try hard?

Answer: That, which is aware of the effort and lack of effort, is the *antar-jyoti*. If it were something that is seen, how would it be an inner light? It will become a *bahir-jyoti* (light outside)! That, which sees the forms in the world is the *ne`tra-jyoti* (the light in the eyes); the forms don't see the *netra-jyoti*. You, yourself, are the *antar-jyoti*, and from the *pragnaa* (right perception) created by Vedanta, that *jyoti* (light) is the *advaya* (non-dual) Brahman.

When the *mana* (emotional mind) begins to turn inwards its *vritti* (mental inclinations) are also turned inwards. Just as the rays of the sun are deflected into assuming many colors, a person sees *alaukika* (not of this world) scenes. When the *vrittis* of the *mana* are contracted the person can hear thunder, or the playing of a flute, or see the beam of a torch. The *vrittis* may get the feeling that Bhagwan, Himself, is coming. The heart becomes *vyaakula* (longing) for Him.

However, all these are preliminary stages of *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress). They are not enduring. The experience is enduring only when a person is able to recognize Bhagwan when he gets a *darshan* (sees a revered object). If he does not recognize that this is Bhagwan, the feeling is not consolidated.

Even when seeing *alaukika karma* (supernatural deeds) the feeling that this is Bhagwan is not stable. The people of Vraja saw Shri Krishna's amazing deeds, but they never felt that He is the Bhagwan.

It is a *lakshana* (characteristic) of Bhagwan's *anugraha* (Grace; compassion) when a person feels Bhagwan's presence during *kirtana* (singing Bhagwan's name and glories), be saved from danger of death, or get timely information about something very important. A person should think deeply about this and become immersed in love for Bhagwan.

Part 2.

Question: Can't we make our life fulfilled by cultivating *sadguna* (good qualities) and doing *shubha karma* (auspicious deeds)? Can't we obtain Moksha (freedom from worldly constraints) that is the goal of life, without obtaining the Ishwara?

Answer: There is a lady who has all the sadgunas. She is beautiful, she dresses beautifully, cooks very well and talks with great sweetness. However, there is nobody in her house. There is no one to see her, eat her excellent cooking, or hear her talk. She looks at herself in the mirror, eats the dishes she cooks, and listens to her own voice. This is how she passes her days. She is quite content with herself.

A man came into her life, and love grew between them. They got married. The man delights in her beauty, relishes her cooking and listens to her talk with deep pleasure. The lady now dresses up for him, cooks for him, and enjoys talking to him. Tell me now, didn't her life become doubly sweet? What is the meaning in being beautiful and having good qualities only for one's self?

There must be a purpose in life. Who should it be for? It should be for all; for the Ishwara who is present in all. It should be for the One. Speak sweetly to all. Cook food for the *aseema* (infinite). Dress up for the Parameshwara. If He is not pleased by your good qualities your life will become constricted, undeveloped, and drained away. You will not get Moksha. You will sink into a drop of the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind, or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = the intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = the subtle pride of individuality); you will not surge like the ocean. Sadguna should not be separate from the Atma. Their purpose should be to please the *sarvaatmaa* (the Atma in all), the Paramatma.

There is some *poorvaagraha* (preconceived notions) and *aagraha* (insistence) in your mana about the Ishwara and Moksha. Is the Ishwara far away from you? Is there any delay in obtaining Moksha? The sarvatma is the Ishwara. To let go of a constricted outlook and work is *aaraadhanaa* (loving worship). Moksha is life becoming an endless stream of love. The Ishwara, and Moksha, is now, here, and it is this.

Question: How can the movements of the *mana* (emotional mind) be controlled, so that the mana gets engrossed in imbuing the sweetness of Bhagwan's lotus feet?

Answer: There was a wild elephant. Nobody could control him. A trained female elephant was sent to him. Captivated by her touch, the wild elephant allowed himself to get caught and trained.

There was an ox. He would break the rope and run away when it was time for him to be yoked to the plough. He was yoked to a plough that had a very strong ox on the other side. The strong ox worked till the unruly ox was tired out.

Your mana is *chanchala* (restless); connect it to Krishna, who is chanchal. Let both dance and sing together. Let them climb on to a tree, gather fruits and flowers, steal butter and eat it. Let your mana cultivate a friendship with one of the monkeys of Shri Rama. Let your mana entertain Shri Rama with its playfulness. Make your mana a *bhoota-pre`ta* (ghost-spirit) of Shankar Bhagwan!

Tell me, when your mana is restless, is the Ishwara not present at that time, at that place? Wherever your mana goes, remove the *sthoolataa* (grossness; denseness) and see the Parameshwara with the *sookshma drishti* (subtle vision). The path of *saadhana* (method for spiritual progress) is not restricted to opposing or blocking the mana. *Anurodha* (appealing; cajoling) is also a path of sadhan. Become a friend of your mana first, and then make your mana your friend. Don't fight with the strength of the mana; recognize the *antaryaamee* (one who abides within) in it.

Chapter 4.

The Brahmaikya Prama By Only The Mahavakya.

[*Mahaa-vaakya* means the ultimate statement of the Vedas that establishes the oneness of the Atma and the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists. *Brahmaikya* means the oneness of the Brahman. *Pramaa* is the true perception of knowledge.]

The investigation of the Atma being the *parama-pre`maaspada* (most loved) results in the manifesting of *aananda* (pure joy) that becomes *preeti* (love), and gives *vairaagya* (detachment) for all other things.

The Atma is *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent), and the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of Gnan. Investigation of the characteristic leads to the person experiencing the *chit* (pure consciousness). This enables him to discriminate between the *jada* (inert matter) and the Atma that is pure consciousness. *Asangataa* (being unattached) manifests.

The Atma is a *kootastha* (unaffected) *sattaa* (existence). Investigating this characteristic leads to the negation of the *asat* (that, which is transient) and *abhaana* (absence of awareness). This knowledge cannot be attained by taking the *aashraya* (refuge) of the *shruti-smriti* (Vedic verses – religious rules). It can be established only by logical deduction.

However, investigation into the Mahavakyas is essential for obtaining the Gnan that the Sat-Chit-Anand (pure existence, pure consciousness and pure joy) Atma is free of the divisions of *de`sha – kaala – vastu* (place – time – matter), and also the divisions of *sajaateeya – vijaateeya – svagata bhe`da* (differences in the same group, in different groups or within itself), and is the *adviteeya* (non-dual) Brahman.

This is why the Mahavakya is the progenitor of the prama of *Brahmaatmaika* (the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma). The *saape`kshya* (needing some other) or *bhe`da* (existence of separateness) glimmers in the *adhishtaana* (substratum) that is *akhanda* (unbroken; eternal).

Neither the Gnan that needs a *gne`ya* (something that is known), nor a gneya that needs Gnan are self-effulgent. That, by which the *saape`ksha* (needing another) glimmers, and in which the sapeksha is seen, in which the sapeksha is *anirvachaneeya* (something that cannot be defined as an eternal truth or a temporary reality), in which the characteristic of being anirvachaniya is negated, is the *pratyak* (inner) non-dual Brahman that is not separate from pure consciousness. It is the *vastu* (object; substance) that is obtained only from Vedanta.

Chapter 5.

The Prapanch Can Be Proved To Be Mithya Only By Brahmanubhooti.

[*Prapancha* means the interactive world in which we live. *Mithyaa* means false; a relative truth that appears to be real for a while. It is transient; not

an eternal existence, not the Satya. The Satya is the Atma that is the non-dual Brahman and the substratum of all that exists. Only a direct personal experience of the Brahman can prove that the prapanch is mithya.]

1. To fully assimilate the principle of Vedanta, it is essential to remove the *aham-bhaava* (feeling of 'I' as being separate) from the *sthoola* (gross), *sookshma* (subtle) and the *kaarana* (causal) body. As long as the *jignaasu* (seeker of knowledge) tries to obtain knowledge about this world with the subtle pride of individuality, the world we see seems as solid as our own body.

The words Gnan, *prateeti* (perception), or mithya will be understood intellectually, but they will not succeed in removing the fear of death, *agnaana* (ignorance about the eternal Atma being the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists), and *dukha* (suffering). Therefore, the first task of a jignasu is to release the Atma that is trapped in separateness by using *viveka* (discrimination about the eternal Atma and the transient objects of the world).

2. It is worth keeping in mind that whatever seems to be subject to change, *jada* (inert matter), or a cause of dukha, is supported on the strength of the *parichhinna* (separated; fragmented) Aham (I). The separateness is *drishya* (seen), and the Aham is the *saakshee* (witness). Therefore, apart from the lack of vivek, there is no reason to consider the two to be one.

It is the *krama* (serial order) of the *shruta-sampradaya* (traditional teaching of the Shrutis, the Vedic verses) that the Atma must first be separated from the *anaatmaa* (that, which is not the Atma). The *aakaara* (form) is neither a distortion of the Sat (pure existence; the Atma) nor its conclusion. Nor is it a mixture. The form is not fit to be called either *sat* (real) or *asat* (false), because it can be seen. There is no *jadataa* (absence of consciousness) in the *chit* (pure consciousness), and no *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) in *aananda* (pure joy). The Atma is Sat + Chit + Anand. It is *aparinaamee* (having no conclusion), *svaymaprakaasha* (self-effulgent; needed no other source of illumination), *paramaananda* (supreme bliss).

3. The Atma is, of course, separate from that which is subject to death, *jada*, or *parichhinna* (separated). It is also the illuminator of *de'sha-kaala-vastu* (place-time-matter), and it is self-effulgent. Therefore, it is the *aparichhinna* (non-dual) Brahman. This is the second krama of the Shrauta Sampradaya. It is in explaining this *siddha vastu* (established object; the Atma) that Vedanta is meaningful. Those who try to obtain *brahmaatmaikyā bodha* (incandescent understanding of the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman) without following this krama are bound to be unsuccessful.
4. When a person obtains a direct personal experience that the Atma is not separate from the Brahman, he sees things from the viewpoint of the Brahman. If any object did exist that was separate from the Brahman, this *pratignā* (oath) of the Shrutis would not be fulfilled: '*E'ka gnaana se`sarva vighnaana`*' (the Gnan of the one gives the acquired Gnan about all things).

Length and breadth, age and weight are perceived; but from the viewpoint of the Brahman they are insignificant perceptions. They have been called *mithya* for the convenience of interaction. This is also why the *svayam-siddha* (self-established) *aatma-padaartha* (the substance that is the Atma) is called the Brahman.

It is only after a person gets the realization that he is the Brahman that the separateness seen in this world is negated. The *prapanch* can never be *mithya* as long as the 'I' remains connected to a separate body.

When the *de'ha* (body), *antahkarana* (fourfold mind or subtle body composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclination, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality) and *beeja* (seed) become *mithya*, the *dvaita-drishti* (viewpoint of duality) becomes nothing more than a perception.

Dvaita is not grasped as *mithya* by mere dialectics. This is *sva-drishti* (the viewpoint of the Self), the *brahm-drishti* (the viewpoint of the Brahman). The meaning of *dvaita* being *mithya* is that the self-effulgent, non-dual Atma-Brahman glimmers in the forms of the world that seems real. Nothing but the Brahman has eternal existence.

5. We try to understand the *rahasya* (quintessence) of the prapanch with our 'I' in our body, as an individual. In this state we can attain a *shoonya-drishhti* (the viewpoint that emptiness is the ultimate reality), but *brahmaanubhooti* (the direct personal experience of the Brahman) is not possible. The separate 'I' is aware of 'this' (which is separate from the 'I'). The separate 'I' has to remain connected to the *samashti* (wholeness) for its existence, Gnan, and *sukha* (complete happiness). An individual has *raaga* (attachment) for that, which is pleasing, *dve'sha* (aversion) for that, which is unpleasant, and *moha* (deluded thinking) regarding the things he perceives. These faults have to be refuted, using *vive'ka* (discrimination about the eternal Atma and the transient world), and *vairaagya* (detachment from worldly matters), if he is to separate his 'I' from his body. If the basic introduction of the *shruta-krama* (serial order given by the Shrutis) is not grasped properly, it is not possible to obtain the *advaita-aatma-bodha* (comprehensive understanding about the non-dual Atma) propounded by Shankar Acharya.
6. The sum of this is that believing the 'I' to be separate, and the world to be false is inverted knowledge. It is only after getting the realization that the Atma is not connected to the body at all – it is the Brahman – that the world can be perceived as *mithya*. The existence of the objects of interaction can be negated only by Brahmagnan and nothing else.

Chapter 6.

A Supreme Purport Of The Darshans (Philosophies).

Only The Amat Vastu (object beyond a fixed opinion) Is Indisputable.

The *rati* (liking), *mati* (thinking) and *gati* (development) of every individual is different. People develop according to their *vaasanaa* (avid desires), *poorva-pragnaa* (right intellect carried over previous births), and *karma* (actions; deeds). The *de'sha* (place), *kaala* (time) and *samaaja* (society) also influence the life of every individual. Just as the form is different, so is the *buddhi* (intellect).

The mati colors the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) according to its decision, and is also colored by them to some extent. When the thinking of different people is different, it results in different *mata* (opinions; theories) being created.

The mati-rati of the Mahapurushas (enlightened Mahatmas) who have obtained the state of Samadhi, and had a direct personal experience of the *bhagvad-tattva* (the essence or true form of Bhagwan), is also separate from each others'. This is why the theories of no two Mahatmas are in full agreement. Even among the disciples of any one Acharya (Master) there are some differences of opinion and understanding.

However, the *vastu* (object) that is not the *karma* (action) of any mati or vishay cannot be touched by the different theories. There are differences on the intermediate purport of all the *shaashtra* (ancient books on religion) and the Acharyas, but there is no *bhe`da* (difference; being separate) in the *parama taatparya* (highest inner meaning). Only the methods of defining it are different; the *tattva-vastu* (essence or true form of the object that is the Atma which is not separate from the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) is the same.

There is disagreement in not only the method of ascertainment, but even in the name. Some Sects disapprove of the use of the word 'Tattva'. Under the circumstances it is appropriate to call the *parama artha* (supreme goal or ultimate truth) '*amata*' (that, which is beyond definition), as the Upanishad has done.

A sequence in the *karma-fala* (the fruit of actions) is accepted, and therefore, it cannot be amat. The amat is free from dispute. It is unopposed. No *dvaita* (duality) or *paarokshya* (implication) can be imagined in it. If it were to be separate from the Atma its non-dual essence could not be established. Therefore, the only refuge is the Gnan that removes *agnaana* (lack of Gnan; ignorance about the essence of the Atma).

You can call agnan by any other name – *pramaada* (carelessness), *avidyaa* (nescience), *mithyaa-gnaana* (erroneous knowledge), *avive`ka* (lack of discrimination), *bhraanti* (false understanding), *vaimukhya* (turning away), - all these refer to much the same thing, and they must be removed.

The *mata* (opinion) is according to the *mati*, the *prakriya* (resulting method) according to the *yukti* (reasoning), the *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) according to the *adhikaaree* (the eligibility of the individual) and the *pramaana* (that, which is established).

Only that, which is a *karana* (instrument) of the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the *prame`ya* (that, which is established) is praman. That, which is incapable of giving the person a direct personal experience of the prameya is an illusion of praman.

This is why *lakshana gnaana* (knowledge about the characteristics) is desired along with the praman. Swarga (Heaven) and other *paroksha* (unseen; not experienced) things, and *aparoksha* (experienced directly but not through the senses) but *agnaata* (unknown) *aatma-svaroopa* (the essence or true form of the Atma) needs the knowledge about the characteristics. This is given by *vaakya* (words).

Shraddhaa (faith) is predominant in one, and *anubhava* (experience) in the other. The ascertainment of the praman and the prameya are futile unless they result in experience. It is only through a direct personal experience that they are known to be true.

Chapter 7.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad – A Glimpse.

Vedanta is the quintessence of the Vedas. It is written in the Manu Smriti that knowledge of the Vedas should be obtained along with the *rahasya* (quintessence).

*Tapovishe`shairvividhaivrataishcha vidichoditaih,
ve`dah kritsnaadhigantavyah sarahasyo dvijanmanaa.*

Manu Smriti 2. 165.

Along with this it is also said in the twelfth chapter that a person should study and practice Atmagnan (Gnan about the Atma), *shama* (restrain of the senses), and the Upanishads.

*Yathoktaanyapi karmaani parihaaya dvijottamah,
aatmagnaane` shame` cha syaadve`dabhyaase` cha yatnavaan.*

Manu Smriti 12. 92.

The purport of this is that Vedanta is a mystical doctrine that establishes Atmagnan. This Gnan is extremely rare and difficult to obtain, but obtaining it is no doubt a duty.

Dadhyanga Atharvana Rishi was a Mahapurusha (enlightened sage) who had obtained Gnan about the Brahman. Indra – the King of the Devtas (demigods) – wanted this knowledge to be kept a secret. He told Dadhyanga Rishi that he would cut off his head if he gave the teaching of *brahmavidyaa* (the knowledge about the Brahman) to anyone.

Indra is the Devta of the *karme`ndriya* (organs of action) of the hands. Such an attitude is not at all unnatural for him. Industrious people generally disapprove of the *vidyaa* (knowledge) that liberates people from the bondage of action.

The Ashwini Kumars are twin brothers, and the doctors of the Devtas. They came to Dadhyanga Rishi one day and prayed to him to give them this teaching. Dadhyanga Rishi explained that he was prepared to do so, but he was afraid of Indra cutting off his head if he did.

‘Don’t be afraid,’ said the Ashwini Kumars. ‘We will detach your head and keep it aside. We will place a horses’ head instead. You can give us the teaching with this head. When Indra cuts off the horse’s head, we will place your own head on your body again.’

Maharshi agreed. He gave them the teaching, speaking through the head of the horse. When Indra came to know this, he came and carried out his threat. The Ashwini Kumars carried out their promise, and attached Maharshi’s head to his body again.

Thus, it is established that Brahmavidya is a *rahasya* (secret mystic doctrine) that even Devtas do not get easily. The *aham* (identity) of the *pravachana* (sermon that interprets a religious topic) is not *laukika* (of this world). Its teaching is given only after *ahankaara* (personal ego; the subtle pride of

individuality) is destroyed. This vidya is not within the scope of *karma* (religious rituals; actions); it is an altogether different kind of knowledge.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is divided into eight chapters. The first and second chapters are a part of the *pravargya karma* (rituals of well-known objects of knowledge). The third and fourth chapters contain the *madhuvidyaa* (a stream of upasana) and the description of the lineage of the Acharyas (Masters). The fifth and sixth chapters are known as the Muni Kanda, or Yagyavalkya Kanda. This has an elaborate description of the Madhuvidya in forms of *jalpakathaa* (a talk by one person) and Vada Katha (a dialogue). The name of the seventh and eighth chapters is Khila Kanda. It contains descriptions of some *upaasanaa* (methods of loving worship), including Shree Mantha, Putra Mantha, etc. It also contains the description of the entire lineage of the Acharyas of this Upanishad.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is *brihad* (huge) in both words and in substance. It is called 'aranyaka' because it was studied in an *aranya* (forest).

There is an amazing episode in the discussion between Raja Janak and Yagyavalkya Muni. Janak says, 'I will give you one thousand more; just give me the *upade'sha* (teaching) about *moksha-praapti* (obtaining Moksha; liberation from all worldly concerns).'

The Muni (sage) had already answered all Janak's questions pertaining to Moksha. There was no *jignaasaa* (query about knowledge) left unanswered. This last question filled Yagyavalkya with *sankocha-bhaya* (embarrassment-fear).

Why is Yagyavalkya's fear mentioned here? It is not because he didn't know the answer to Janak's question. It is not even because he was incapable of giving a discourse. Yagyavalkya understood, 'Janak is evaluating all my teaching. He is paying for this teaching about Moksha, calculating its worth at a thousand gold coins. This becomes a *kaama-prashna* (a question related to worldly desire) and a *kaama-uttara* (an answer related to worldly desire). The Raja is supremely *me'dhaavee* (intelligent; wise). He already had Gnan about the Brahman. He is imprisoning me in a ring of a thousand gold coins. If I give him further teaching that, too, will be *nikshipta* (thrown; deposited) in the same category.' This is why Muni Yagyavalkya became fearful.

The purport of the story in the Upanishad is that all questions regarding Moksha have been answered. No further need remains for any clarification regarding *brahmaatmaikya bodha* (the incandescent understanding about the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma). The intension is not to show Yagyavalkya's fear; it is to show the *poornataa* (wholeness; being complete in itself) of the Upanishad. The *vaktaa* (preacher; speaker) of Brahmagnan is truly wonderful, and so is the obtaining of Brahmagnan.

Gnan about the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of the Atma cannot be obtained by worldly logic, theology, or that part of the Vedas that describe rituals for obtaining benefits in this world or in Swarga. It can be obtained successfully only from the Upanishads. This principle is accepted unanimously by Vedanta – the Upanishads – that give the ultimate Gnan. Bhagwan Shankaracharya has stated this in his commentary on the connection of all the *sootra* (aphorisms) in Vedanta, in the form of questions and answers.

Question: It is not tenable to say that Atmagnan can be obtained only through the Upanishads, because the Atma is a subject of *aham-pratyaya* (the belief that the Atma exists); it exists in the form of '*aham*', '*aham*' ('I', 'I').

Answer: What you say is not correct, because the Atma is not the subject of the aham-pratyay; it is the *saakshee* (witness).

A man can make a million attempts, but it will be impossible for him to obtain the experience of the Atma through *karma-shaashtra* (the books on religious rituals) or *tarka-shaashtra* (books on theology). Apart from being the sakshi of the aham-pratyaya, and separate from the *kartaa* (the doer of the action), it is the *sarva-bhootastha* (one who abides in all beings), *sama* (having equilibrium), *e'ka* (one), *kootastha* (unaffected), and *nitya* (eternal). It is the Atma of all. The *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) of the Atma cannot be obtained by any other method.

Verse 5. 9. 26 of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states clearly, through the words of Yagyavalkya:

Tam tvoupanishadam purusham prichhaami.

That, which is expounded in the Upanishad is the Upanishad. The learned Shakalya was defeated by Yagyavalkya because of not having Gnan about the Purusha (Supreme Being).

The Madhu Kanda is *aagama-pradhaana* (predominantly a sacred text). It gives the *bodha* (incandescent understanding) about the swarup of the Brahman that is not separate from the *pratyagatmaa* (the Atma within). The Muni Kanda is *upapatti-pradhaana* (dealing mainly with ascertaining the subject). Both conclude in a brief summary of the purport of Vedanta. The Shruti (Vedic verses) at the conclusion of the Madhu Brahman is: *Tade`tad brahma apoorvamanaparamanantaramabaahyamayatmaa brahma sarvaanubhooh ityanushaasanam. (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4. 5. 19.)*

Here, the meaning of the word *anushaasan* is the quintessence of the teaching of Vedanta.

What is the teaching?

The Brahman has no *kaarana* (cause) and no *kaarya* (effect), there is nothing inside and nothing outside it.

What is this Brahman?

It is the Atma within, the *drashtaa* (one who sees), *shrotaa* (one who listens), *mantaa* (one who thinks), *boddhaa* (one who gives comprehensive understanding), *sarvaanubava svaroopaa* (one who is the form of all experiences).

The Brahman is the Atma of all, and it experiences everything. The Atma is free of effect or cause. It is unchanging, and complete in itself. It is not separate from the *pratyagatmaa* (the Atma within). This is stated clearly in the Upanishad itself, as being the quintessence of Vedanta.

This mantra is given at the end of the fourth *braahmana* (a portion of the Vedas), in the Muni Kanda:

Sa vaa e`sha mahaanaja aatmaa ajaroamaroamritoabhayo brahma abhayam vai brahma, abhayam hi vai brahma bhavati ya e`vam ve`da.

(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 6. 4.25.)

The Atma is free of birth, decay, death, etc. It is free of the efforts of *avidyaa* (nescience; identification with the body), and free of fear.

When a learned person obtains the *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) of the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma, he becomes the *abhaya* (fearless) Brahman. This is how the teaching of the Brihadaranyaka has been summed up. The commentator has stated this clearly and unequivocally.

The Atma is called a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) in the form of *vignan*, in the fourth brahman of the sixth chapter. After that it has been called the '*sarvasya vashee sarvasya eeshaanah*' (the one who has control over all and is the ruler of all). The important thing here is that the Atma should be understood as being something that is beyond this interactive world.

Why is it *asansaaree* (not of this interactive world)? Why is it *eeshaana* (the ruler; Shiva)?

It is stated clearly that the Atma is untouched by *karma* (actions; rituals). It neither increases nor diminishes by karma.

In some places in the Upanishads the style has been adopted that the Paramatma entered in the forms of jeevas. The purport of this statement is that the Paramatma is not separate from the Atma. It pervades the *de'ha* (body) made by itself.

It is called the *chakshu* (eyes) because it sees, *shrotra* (ears) because it hears, etc. In some places the jeevatma has been negated as a method of describing the Paramatma.

Naanyotosti prashtaa naanyotosti shrotaa.

(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 5. 7. 23.)

The Shruti declares that there is no drashta or shrota apart from the Paramatma. The Akshara Brahman is of the same opinion.

Even through the *laya-pratipaadana* (illustrating the method of merging) the Upanishad analyses the swarup of the *nirvishe'sha* (without distinction) Brahman. The episode of Indra, the King of Swarga and his wife, Indrani, is described to show the nirvishesh form of the Brahman by describing the

vishva-vaishvaanara (the Brahman as the world – the fire that digests food) in the *taijasa –sootratmaa* (the consciousness in the subtle body – the Atma), and in the *kaaranaatmaka* (causal), and in *ne`ti – ne`ti* (not this, not this, rejecting everything until only the Brahman remains) of the Atma that is the negation. It is certain that this Brahman is neither the effect nor the cause of anything. This is also a *vidyaa* (knowledge; skill) for describing the non-dual Brahman.

At another place the *ashe`sha-vishe`sha* (complete – distinctive) have been negated to describe the nirvishesh Atma-Tattva. In fact, this is the principal purport of all Vedanta.

What is the swarup of the *akshar-tattva* (the imperishable essence)?

People who have Brahmagnan proclaim it with: *sarvatomukhi udghosha* (universal declaration). It is neither *sthoola* (gross) nor *sne`ha* (clinging), nor *chhayaa* (a shadow). *Tama* (darkness of ignorance) cannot touch it. It contains neither *vaayu* (air) nor *aakaasha* (space). It is *asanga* (unattached), *arasa* (without flavor), and *agandha* (without smell). The faculties of vision, hearing and speech do not exist in it; nor does it have a *mana* (emotional mind). *Te`ja* (effulgence), *praana* (the breath that sustains life), *mukha* (mouth), and *maatras* (measure) cannot even be imagined in it. It has no outside or inside. It is neither anyone's *bhoktaa* (the one who enjoys worldly pleasures) nor anyone's *bhogyaa* (that, which is enjoyed).

*Sa hovaachaitadvai tadaksharam gaargi braahmanaa abhivadanti,
asthoolamananu arhasvamadeerghamalohitamasne`hamachchhaayato
avaagvanaashamasangamarasamagandhamachakshushkamashrotramavaaga
manote`jaskamapraanamamukhamamaatramanantaramabaahya na
tadashnaati kinchana na tadashnaati kashchana.*

(Briahdaranyaka Upanishad 5. 8. 8.)

You will see that in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad there is one sentence that is given repeatedly. This *vaakya* (sentence; statement) negates adjectives. This Atma, which is the form of the Brahman, is explained by the method of *ne`ti-ne`ti* (not this – not this). It cannot be an object that one can absorb through the senses. It neither decays nor shatters. It is unattached; it does not get

attached. In it there is no bondage, no pain, no being used up. These points are given in the Upanishad.

Sa e'sha ne'ti ne'tyaatmaa agrihyo na hi grihyate` asheeryo na hi sheeryate`, asango na hi sajyate` asito na vyathate` na rishyati.

The repeated use in just the fifth and sixth chapters shows the intense insistence on this principle in the Upanishad. It is stated emphatically in the fourth chapter that the *upade'sha* (teaching) of the Brahman is nothing but a refutation of the vishesh.

Athaato aade'sha ne'ti ne'tin a hye'tasmaaditi ne'tyanyatparamasti. (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. 4, 3, 6.)

The emphasis on *nishe'dha* (prohibiting), and dependence on it for Tattvagnan is an indication the *apoorvataa* (outstanding virtue) of the principle of the Upanishad. It is a fact that this principle cannot become a direct personal experience without the Upanishad.

The episode of the Maitreyi Brahmana is given in the fourth chapter of the Madhu Kanda, and also in the sixth chapter of the Muni Kanda. This repeating of the brahmana reiterates the principle.

The sixth chapter gives a firm decision about the complete meaning. The Madhu Kanda is the *aagama* (Purana), the Yagyavalkya Kanda is the *upapatti* (demonstration) and the sixth chapter contains the *upasamhaara* (conclusion).

Let us take a quick look at the substance of the episode of the Maitreyi Brahmana in brief. Maharshi Yagyavalkya was preparing to leave the *grihastha aashrama* (the stage of life of a married householder) and accept the *sannyasa aashrama* (the stage of life of complete renunciation). He had two wives, Maitreyi and Katyayini. He told Maitreyi, 'Come, I will divide my worldly possessions between the two of you.'

Maitreyi was not greedy for material wealth; she was filled with a longing for the *amirtatva* (elixir of eternal life). 'If I get all your wealth, will I get amritatva? Will I get *mukti* (liberation)?' she asked.

'Your life will be the same as that of any person who enjoys great wealth,' replied the Maharshi. 'One cannot hope to obtain amritatva by using wealth.'

Had it been possible to do so, by using wealth to do rituals that give amritatva, you would have had some hope, but amritatva is not the fruit of karma. It is not something that can be achieved by effort. It can only be attained by Gnan. Rituals involve a number of ingredients, assistants, equipment, eligibility and the feeling of being the doer. All these are contrary to Gnan. Karma and Gnan cannot exist together.'

Hearing this, Maitreyi said, 'I have no need for wealth. Please give me that, by which I can obtain amritatva.' This *mumukshaa* (desire to be liberated) and *jignaasaa* (desire for knowledge) of Maitreyi's became the source of inspiration for Yagyavalkya's teaching.

Maharshi said, 'A woman loves her husband and other relatives. Why do people love other people? Is it to fulfill some need of the person they love? No; not at all. They love to fulfill their own need. Everybody knows that a person whose behavior is favorable is loved more than a person whose behavior is unpleasant.

The fact is love is never *nishkapata* (free of deceit) or *nishkaama* (free of selfish motives). *Nirupaadhika* (free of attributes) love is possible only for our Atma, so we should get detached from the *anaatmaa* (that, which is not the Atma). We should get the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the Atma for which we have real love.

To get the sakshatkara of the Atma we should do *shravana* (listen to and grasp spiritual discourses) of the Upanishad, meditate on the reasoning, and do *nididhyaasana* (bring the mind back repeatedly to the object of meditation). 'Nothing but the Atma is worthy of seeing.' This is the meaning of these words.

Why should we do the *darshan* (see with reverence) of only the Atma? The darshan of the Atma means Gnan. The Gnan about everything is obtained through the Gnan about the Atma. Just as an object that seems to be a snake is found to be a rope, this world of name and form is actually the Atma. Just as the knowledge that the object that was perceived to be a snake is actually a rope, Gnan about the Atma-tattva gives the knowledge about the whole world. Therefore, only the Atma is *drashtavya* (fit to be seen), and nothing else.

Why is it so?

That is because a person who knows himself to be a Brahmin, Devta, or any other, as separate from the Atma drops away from the *amrita* (elixir that bestows eternal life) that is the form of the Brahma-Atma. It is true that the Brahmin, Kshatriya, *loka* (this world), the Vedas, *bhoo* (the earth) are all the Atma. They are all equal in the substratum of the Atma, and therefore the Atma is the only Satya (existence that can never be negated); the Tattva of all. Just as the actual Tattva of an object that is imagined to be a snake, garland, stick, streak of water, or a crack in the ground, is actually a rope, the Atma is the Satya, the Tattva of all space, time, matter, etc that are imagined in it.

Many examples are given in the Upanishad to establish that this *prapancha* (interactive world) is not separate from the *chidaatmaa* (consciousness that is the Atma) and the only Satya. The point is, when something needs to be understood in order to understand something else, the second object is not separate from the first. For example, if a drum is being played and a person can't hear it, he will not be able to hear the notes of music and words of the song either. Therefore, the specific sound of the drum is not separate from sound in general.

In the same way, this world of name and form cannot be absorbed without the *chidvastu* (the object that is conscious; the Atma), and hence, it is not separate from the Chidatma.

When we see some *roopa* (form; appearance) we first see the *prakaasha* (light) and then the appearance and the form. Similarly, the Chidatma has to be established before the world of name and form can be seen. Therefore, nothing exists, except the Chidatma.

We gather *inghana* (fuel) – some dry, some liquid. Smoke rises when it is combined with fire, and sparks shoot out. In the same way, the breathing of the Paramartha Atma effortlessly creates the Rig and other Vedas, *loka-paraloka* (this world and other worlds), etc. The small sparks are initially known as fire and then recognized as flames. Are they a form of fire or are they something else? They cannot be described as the form of *agni-tattva* (the element of fire), or as a separate Tattva. They are *anirvachaneeya* (that which cannot be defined as anything specific). Similarly, the millions of *brahmaanda*

(universes) cannot be described as either the Tattva, or an *a-tattva* (not the Tattva).

Even at the time of *pralaya* (Dissolution) the world of name and form merges into the Paramartha. The example of *jala-samudra* (water – the ocean) is given to explain this. Clouds shower rain on mountain peaks, rivulets of water flow down to make a river and the river merges into the ocean. In the same way, the world may flow over with names and forms, but ultimately everything merges into the Atma-Tattva.

The proclamation of the Upanishad is, therefore, '*idam sarvam yadayamaatmaa*' – everything that is *drishyamaana* (can be perceived) is not any other; it is our own Atma that is *saakshaata aparoksha* (known directly but not through the senses).

Let go of the concepts of the *nitya* (daily), *naimittika* (occasional) or *praakritika* (natural) Dissolution. When *avidyaa* (nescience; identification with the body) is removed by Brahmatmaikya bodha, it is the *aatyantika pralaya* (absolute dissolution of the interactive world). This is called Moksha. In this state it is not possible to accept that any other object exists, apart from the non-dual Atma. This is why the Upanishad roars, 'The Atma is *anantara, abaahya* (not within, not outside)'. It is the entire *pragnaana-ghana* (densely packed right perceptoin). The *sootra* (rule; aphorism) calls it *tanmaatratra*.

The Upanishad gives the example of sea water becoming hard when combined with clay and heat. It becomes rock salt. When it melts it merges into its cause. Then as the reflection of the sun and moon are seen in a bowl of water, so are foam and froth created by the impact of cause and effect and so is the existence of separate jeevas. Then, separate names are given to separate forms. It seems that a separate *gotra* (lineage) has the separate son of a separate father.

When the teaching of the Shastras (ancient religious texts) is given by the Acharyas (Teachers) of the Shastras and a person obtains Brahmaavidya, it becomes certain that this *kaarya-kaarana samghaata* (impact of effect – cause) is mithya. It is perceived in the Brahman that is the substratum on which everything is superimposed, without having eternal existence.

That means the world of beings and matter is only a perception.

Just as the moon and sun reflected in water disappear when the water dries up, the feeling of being a jeeva is removed from the consciousness. When the reflections are removed, only the real sun and moon remain. Similarly, when the feeling of being a jeeva is removed, the *nimitta* (instrumental factor) is removed, and the Paramartha Brahman remains. This is called pragnanaghana by the Shrutis. This is absolutely pure and non-dual.

The conclusion of Yagyavalkya's sermon is the non-dual pragnanaghana. After this, to say that there is no *sangnaa* (noun; consciousness) after death is a prohibition of sangna in general. This seems illogical. That is why Maitreyi placed a question. 'Bhagwan, you have confused me by saying this' (6. 5.14).

Yagyavalkya said, 'O Maitreyi, I am not confusing you. This Atma is *avinaashee* (indestructible; eternal). It never expires. *Avinaashee vaa are`ayamaatmaa anuchchhittidharmaa*. (The nature of this Atma is indestructible. It never expires). I have not prohibited *sangnaa-saamaanya* (nouns in general; it is not correct to say that there is no Atma after the death of the body); only the *vishe`sha sangnaa* (specific noun). The point is it is only when the knowledge of separateness prevails in the mind that a person has knowledge about the specific, or anything separate. Dvaita seems real at that time. The *kartaa* (doer) is another. He sees separate actions done by separate organs of action.

When the feeling of separateness is removed by *brahma-bhaava* (the feeling of being the Brahman), all fragmentation is removed. It is like the illusion of a snake being dispelled as soon as the person realizes that it is actually a piece of rope. Similarly, only the substratum remains, the awareness that the Atma is the Brahman.

Brahma-vidya makes all duality the Atma. The absence of duality is in there being no possibility of *kriyaa* (action), *kaaraka* (doer), etc. '*Yatra hee dvaitamiva bhavati taditara itaram pashyati, yatra tvasya sarvamaatmaivaabhoota tatke`na kam pashye`t*. (6. 5.15).'

It is not possible even to say that when the objects of duality are absent, the person sees only his own Atma, because the Atma is self-effulgent. It needs no

other source of illumination. In the Atma there is no separate *prakaashya-prakaahsaka* (illuminated – illuminator).

How can the *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) that gives the vignan of all be obtained? When the feeling of separateness is removed, only the pristine *pragnaana* (right perception) is left.

It is described clearly in the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters that *ne`ti – ne`ti* (not this – not this; negating everything that is not the Atma) is the only method for obtaining Gnan about the Atma. The Atma is *agraahya* (cannot be absorbed), *asheerya* (does not decay), *asanga* (unattached), *asita* (black), and free of suffering or be used up. Apart from this, no method for amritva remains to be taught. Explaining this, Yagyavalkya told Maitreyi, ‘The teaching of *anushaasana* (the rules) is concluded.’ Then he accepted Sanyas (became a Monk), doing the rites for himself.

Let us take a review of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. The Gnan, ‘*Aham brahmaasmi* – I am the Brahman’, is the method for obtaining the amritatva. The knowledge of separateness is caused by avidya. The Brahman is *sacchidaananda* (Sat = pure existence, Chit = pure consciousness and Anand = pure bliss).

This Gnan also gives *brahmatva* (being the Brahman). The only thing Brahmagnan does is to remove the distinction; it does not give any new vignan or anand. Therefore, the anand indicated by the removal of avidya is Moksha. It is eternal. Since Moksha is obtained only by Gnan, Gnan has no connection with *kartavya* (duties; doing something); neither before nor after. A person becomes Mukta (liberated) the very instant he gets the bodha of Brahmagnan. This principle of the Upanishads has been established unambiguously in the Brihadaranyaka.

Aatme`tye`vopaaseeta (3. 4. 7) is where the exposition of Brahmagnan begins. It is said that a person who realizes that he is the Brahman, through Brahmagnan, becomes everything (3. 4. 9). He was the Brahman from the start. The Atma is also the Brahman. ‘I am the Brahman (3. 4. 10)’ – this *sarvabhaava* (the feeling of being everything), *poorna-bhaava* (the feeling of being whole; complete), or Brahma-bhava is Moksha.

This happens when a person gets Gnan. It is clear that *apoornataa* (the feeling of being incomplete) is caused by agnan. When agnan is removed by Gnan that, which is *nitya-praapta* (always ours) seems to become *praapta* (obtained). It is like someone forgetting that he has already put on his necklace and looking everywhere for it, and then realizing that he has already put it on!

It is certain that when a person obtains Gnan the feeling of not being the Brahman is removed. Therefore, the feeling of not being the Brahman is caused by avidya. It is mithya.

A person who knows only separateness is an animal (3. 4.10). *Brahmaatma-darshana* (the vision that the Brahman is the Atma) and *sarvaatma-bhaava* (the feeling that everything is one's own Atma) are simultaneous. There is no other *kartavya* (to be done) in-between.

There is no doubt that the *poornataa* (being poorna) of the Atma – meaning, its non-dual essence – is the irrefutable principle of the Upanishads, and this is their purport.

Chapter 8.

The quintessence of the Kaushitaki Upanishad is the basis of the effulgence of this direct personal experience.

Raja Pratardan's Mukti.

There was a Raja. His name was Pratardan. He was the son of Devadas. Indra – the Raja of Swarga – was pleased with his courage, fortitude and goodwill. He said, 'Raja! Ask for a boon!'

Pratardan said, 'I will not ask for a boon as per my buddhi. You please decide which boon is *hitatama* (of the greatest benefit) for all mankind, and give that to me.'

Indra thought about the word 'hitatam' used by Raja Pratardan. 'What is the purport of this word? Swarga (Heaven) is called 'hita' (beneficial) because it has much more *sukha* (happiness) than the mortal world. To obtain Swarga a person has to work hard and do rituals like Yagnas and Yaagas. The fruit is given according to the effort. Therefore, *vairagya* (detachment from worldly matters) is a greater *sukha* than the *hita* of the Swarga-*sukha*.

Vairagya can be called *hitakara* (giving hita) because it requires no effort, no objects and no *mantra* (group of words with subtle power), and the person does not need to depend on any other person or factor.

However, even in *vairagya* there is a *dosha-drishti* (a glimpse of faults) that one has to accept. It is true that there is no effort in it, but there is no pleasure in it either. The feeling of *nivritti* (withdrawing from worldly activities) must be kept in mind.

So, even more beneficial than *vairagya* is *aatma-bodha* (incandescent understanding about the Atma). Through this a person experiences eternal joy. Therefore, the word *hitatam* used by Pratardan means *Atmagnan*,' decided Indra. 'Pratardan wants to obtain *Atmagnan*. He wants me to decide what *hitatam* is; that means, he is surely a *jignaasu* (seeker of the highest knowledge).' After coming to this conclusion Indra said, '*maame`va vijaaneehi*', meaning, 'know me.'

Thought is given to these words. Indra said, 'Know me'. Maam means me. The word *asmat* (me) is used in two ways. 'I am the thousand-eyed Indra', and 'I am Indra, with a thousand eyes.' That means, 'this body is mine'. The word *mein* (I) refers to the *shareera* (gross physical form) and also to the *svaami* (Master) of the shareer.

The eyes through which a body is seen cannot see the Swami of the body. However, the use of the words 'my shareer' infers that a *sookshma* (subtle) body abides within the *sthoola* (gross) shareer.

The gross body that houses the subtle body is called *mein* and *me`raa* (mine) in interaction. This is something that can be understood by even a fool. Under the circumstances, what should be the meaning of 'know me'? It should be something that is not understood in general parlance. It is certain that 'know me' refers to the *alaukika* (not of the mortal world) Atma that is separate from the gross and the subtle bodies.

If you ask what the *fala* (fruit) is of the *vignaana* (acquired knowledge), I will explain. The fruit of *tattvagnaana* (Gnan about the Tattva, the essence or true form of the Atma that is not separate from the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) is to be free of any connection with *dukha* (sorrow). Therefore, Gnan is *hitatam*, because no *dukha* remains once a person obtains Gnan.

Had Indra's *mein* been the form with a thousand eyes, it would definitely have had a fear of illness etc. Had Indra's *mein* been his subtle body, which directs the gross body, it would be concerned with *punya* (spiritual merit earned by good deeds) and *paapa* (sin) that are inevitable for the doer of actions. However, Indra felt no fear even when he killed Vishwaroopa. Obviously, Indra's *mein* is the *chidaatmaa* (the pure consciousness that is the Atma). It is this *mein* that Indra is speaking of.

Indra said, 'Vishwaroopa was the son of Tvashta. He was the *purohita* (priest who undertakes rituals on behalf of the sponsor) of the Devtas (demigods; presiding deities). He went against me, even though it was I who had appointed him. I killed him. *Brahmahatyaa* (the sin of killing a Brahmin) gets attached to the *kartaa* (doer); not to the Chidatma. I get no *dosha* (guilt of the offence) if I kill an ascetic who does not have Vedanta-Gnan, and is turned

towards the external world. I have killed innumerable *asura* (of demoniac races) in all three *loka* (realms – the nether world, the mortal world and Swarga), but I am the Chidatma; I get no paapa. Not a hair of my head is harmed.

Pratardan! This is not my *garimaa* (greatness); it is the prestige of Gnan. If anyone else knows himself to be the Chidatma, he will become just the same as me. Even if he mentally or verbally kills his mother or father, there is no obstacle in a Gnani's obtaining Moksha. If some paapa is done by him, no shadow of joy or sorrow appears on his face.'

The purport of this is that once a person gets *brahmaatmaikya bodha* (the incandescent understanding of the Atma being the Brahman) no action of his results in his becoming greater or diminished. Mukti (liberation) is not destroyed. The purport of the Shastras (ancient texts on religion) is the bodha of *nitya-mukti* (eternal liberation).

Now, the question is, paapa cannot touch the Atma, whether the person is stupid or a Gnani. That being the case, what is special about a *tattva-ve'ttaa* (one who knows the Tattva)?

The answer is, 'I am a karta' – in this sentence the subtle pride of being the doer is where paapa abides. It is because of this point not being understood that ignorance leads to the superimposing the deed on the Chidatma that is his own *svaroopaa* (essence; true form). This is why depression and dejection are seen on the face. The person's *te'ja* (natural brightness) wanes. He is also born in Narak (Hell).

When a person gets Brahmatmaikya bodha the seed of karma is destroyed. The shoot of *janma* (birth) will not sprout. This knowledge fills the person with joy. In the interactive world we see that a roasted seed does not sprout. Similarly, karmas are burnt by the fire of Gnan. They do not lead to rebirth.

The question now is, when people who know the Tattva – meaning, the enlightened persons – are not subject to *karmafala* (the fruits of their deeds), why do they give up *paapa-karma* (sinful deeds)?

The secret behind this is that while it is true that a Tattvagna faces no harm in *paraloka* (other realms, like Swarga), there is harm for him in this world, which

is why a Tattvagna never feels like doing anything sinful. One *haani* (harm) is that noble people avoid a person who does paapa. Paapa is a Hell that is experienced directly in this world. The Shrutis (Vedic verses) say that those who praise or criticize a Tattvagna obtain the fruit of his actions. If a Gnani does paapa, the person who speaks ill of him will go to Narak. If any *karmee* (one who does religious rituals) praises the actions of a Gnani, he will also behave in the same way. That is why enlightened people do not behave in a way that is sinful or faulty.

The second point is, only a person whose *antahkarana* (fourfold mind, or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* – mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality) has been purified by doing good deeds obtains Tattvagnan. His antahkarana is filled with a desire to do whatever is good, and so he does only the things that give punya.

What more is there to be said? For a *tattvave`ttaa* (one who knows the Tattva), the fear of realms after death do not exist. Acharya Shankar has written in the Upadesha Sahasri, 'For an Atmagnani there is no fear of death, or realms after death. For him, even Brahma, Indra, and others with great power are *shochaneeya* (mournful).

Paralokamayam yasya naasti mrityubhayam tathaa,

yasyaatmagnasya shochyaah syuh sabrahme`ndraa apeeshvaraah.

Indra explained the greatness of Atmagnan to Raja Pratardan, and encouraged him to obtain it. 'Know the Atma. Obtain the *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) of the Atma.' Then Indra gave the teaching of Tattvagnan by saying, '*praanosmi pragnaatmaa,*' and other statements.

In the gross body, *kriyaa-shakti* (the power to act) abides in the *praana* (life-sustaining breath), and *pragnaa* (right perception) abides in the Gnan-shakti (the power of Gnan). The Atma is the *adhishtaana* (substratum) of both pragna and prana. Therefore, the Atma is recognized by both these *upaadhi* (attributes superimposed on the substratum).

Pratardan did *vichaara* (thought deeply) about the purport of Indra's words. 'Indra says, "I am the *pragnaatma praana* (the prana and pragna of the Atma)." What is the meaning of this?'

Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that it is our Atma that is *aananda* (joy), *ajara* (un-decaying), *abhaya* (fearless), *amrita* (immortal), and *vishoka* (free of sorrow). I will tell you how Pratardan came to this conclusion.

No words, in any language, can describe the Atma through the use of words. No words exist that give the exact meaning of the Atma. That is why there is no other method for indicating what the Atma is, apart from upadhis.

Experts on the use of language have investigated the power of words and come to the conclusion that *guna* (qualities; attributes), *kriyaa* (actions), *jaati* (groups; species), *sambandha* (connection), *roodhi* (rising) and other words that are instrumental in any activity do not exist in the Atma.

What is guna? It is white, black, sour, sweet, etc.

What is kriya? It is *paachana* (digestion), *dhaavana* (running), etc.

Jaati is, human, cow, buffalo, etc. Sambandha is husband-wife. Roodhi is the lotus, etc. None of these have the capacity to establish the Atma through any group of words.

In that case, what is to be done?

The Atma is indicated through a *vastu* (object) that is close to it.

The question is: why is the Atma not indicated by the objects close to it – like the eyes or ears – and other upadhis?

The Atma is indicated; it is the Atma that is the *shrotaa* (the one who listens), *drashtaa* (the one who sees), *ghraataa* (the one who smells), and in other forms. But even more than these, the pragna and the prana are extremely close to the *antaraatmaa* (the Atma within), and so it is appropriate to use them to indicate the Atma.

What is the meaning of the prana and the pragna?

Through the *abhidhaa vritti* (literal power, or sense of a word) the word *praana* is the *vaayu* (air; wind) through which effort is possible. That, which is the form of *kriya-shakti*, is the *prana*.

The same *shakti* is in the word *pragnaa*. It gives the *bodha* of the intellectual meaning, for obtaining *Gnan*.

Who is the *adhishtana* of the *braanti* (false understanding) of both? Meaning, in which *paramaatha tattva* (the Supreme essence of the highest Truth) do they glimmer?

Certainly, there has to be some *adhikarana* (connection) with their *bhaava* (existence) and *abhaava* (non-existence). The *adhikaran* of the *abhava* is also the *adhikaran* of the *bhava*. Therefore, these temporary *upadhis* are only a *bhranti*. Their being the cause is a figurative application in the *Atmadev*.

A pale moon is pointed out to someone by telling him to look at an overhanging branch of a tree, and then look a bit higher, to see the dim globe. The branch is not connected to the moon in any way. Similarly, these *upadhis* are used to show the *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent) *sarvaavabhaasaka* (illuminator of all) substratum, that is the *Atma*. The body, senses, etc are used to show the activities of *karma* and *Gnan*.

Who is that, by the association of whom these become *samartha* (capable)?

‘It is no other; it is I, myself.’ Decide firmly that this is a fact. Everything connected to differences like space, time and matter is mental. In these, the *gamanaagamana* (coming and going), *krama* (serial order), *parinaama* (result; end) etc are all activities of the *pragna* and the *prana*. Our *svaroopa* (essence; true form) has no connection with them. They are *jada* (inert matter), but they are perceived to be *ajada* (having consciousness) by the proximity of the *aatma-chaitanya* (the consciousness of the *Atma*).

Who is that *Atma-chaitanya*?

Decide firmly – ‘that *Atma-chaitanya* is I, myself.’

The body, senses, *mana* and *prana* are all *drishya* (that, which is perceived by the senses). Therefore, they are *jada*. They shine without having any real

existence in the chetan Atma. The Atma is the non-dual effulgence by which everything is perceived.

Like the branch used to indicate the moon, if the Atma-Tattva indicated by the upadhis can be understood by you, then do the *upaasanaa* (worship) of the *upahita* (benevolent Atma) that has upadhis.

Prana has two good qualities – *aayusha* (longevity) and *amritatva* (eternal life). People who do prana-upasana obtain a long life and Swarga after leaving this mortal body.

The guna of pragna is *satya-sankalpa* – every resolve coming true. If a person who is *sakaama* (having worldly desires) does dhyana on this guna, he will attain the *siddhi* (supernatural power) of making all his resolves into realities. If he is *nishkaama* (free of worldly desires) he will obtain Tattvagnan. He will attain *e`kaagrataa* (single-pointed focus) through upasana. After this, he should again do the *vive`chana* (discrimination; investigation) of the upadhis of the pragna and the prana, from the beginning, to obtain the direct personal experience of the Tattva.

The five *gnaane`ndriya* (sense organs) are the ears, eyes, skin, nose and tongue. The five *karme`ndriya* (organs of action) are the speech, hands, feet, anus and reproductive organs.

The organs of action are the servants of the sense organs. The body is developed by a combination of Gnan and karma; to know through Gnan and act through karma. The oneness of Gnan abides in the pragna. The oneness of karma abides in the prana-vayu. The pragna activates the indriya (sense organs and organs of action) with due consideration, and the prana-vayu prompts them into activity. This is the arrangement for all interaction in this world.

Regarding this, it is the opinion of some people that the eyes and other sense organs are active in their respected *vishaya* (objects of the senses) in more than one at a time.

That is not correct. Not even the most skillful person can obtain knowledge about more than one object at a time. An ordinary person does not get the knowledge about the serial order of their functioning, because time is

exceedingly subtle. Even if a person does get to know it, a *dhoorta* (trickster) covers it up, and people get deluded.

The point is none of the indriyas, under any circumstances, can be activated in their objects without the help of the pragna-prana. A serial order is essential for that, which needs help from some other, to be able to function. The assistant helps all the indriyas turn by turn. Had it not been so, deceitful people would have recited all the Vedas in an instant!

Just as pragna and prana activate speech according to the serial order just explained – pragna giving impetus to the prana, and the prana to speech – the same is the method of activating each indriya.

The faculty of speech is activated at the compassion of the pragna and the prana. Then the other senses translate it. If the senses were to abandon this krama and become activated simultaneously, the pragna and prana would be drawn in a disorderly manner. There would be no clarity or cohesion in speech.

Therefore, it is essential to accept a serial order in the activities of the sense organs. All the senses cooperate and absorb their respective objects one at a time.

The pragna and prana assist and inspire the activities of the indriyas. It is with their help that the indriyas succeed in their methodical functions. The *saakshee* (witness) of the pragna, prana and indriyas' diverse and wonderful activities is one the one Chidatma.

The Chidatma is *nirvikaara* (free of distortions) and the witness of everything. It is separate from everything. Through the upadhis of the pragna and prana and the sense organs, it is the *gnaataa-bhoktaa* (knower – enjoyer); through the upadhi of the karmendriyas it is the karta. The Atma, separated by upadhis, is the sakshi. When a person gets the bodha of the sakshi being the non-dual Brahman he automatically gets the bodha of the upadhis and all their behavior and effect.

The question is: are the prana, *vaak* (faculty of speech), etc all equal, or is any among them superior to the rest? The reply given by the *shruti* (Vedic verses) is that the prana is superior, because it is the cause of life. This is why a person should give priority to taking refuge in the prana, rather than in the vaak or any

other indriya. This is the method for obtaining Atmagnan, because it is the prana that arouses the body, and this is why it is called the 'Uktha'.

There is a doubt about this – the prana does not arouse the *shareera* (body) during the deep sleep state, only in the waking state. So the person should not be considered the cause of *utthaapana* (arousing; awakening); the pragna should be considered the cause.

This body is activated and directed by the strength of the sense organs, organs of action, buddhi, and prana. It is with their power that the body moves like a ball of cotton; the person doesn't feel its weight.

The *aham-buddhi* (the intellect of the individual 'I'), along with the *chidaabhaasa* (the illusion of being pure consciousness) is established in the root of everything. The feeling of the *poorva-paksha* (former opinion) is that the shareer is aroused by the pragna, so we should worship the pragna as the Uktha, rather than the prana. The Shruti has resolved this by saying, '*Yo vai praanaah saa prajaa ya vai pragna sa praanah.*'

The *siddhaantee* (the one who holds the principle) is of the opinion that it is true that it is the pragna that does the arousing of the shareer, but it is not done by pragna alone; it does so with the help of the prana. If the *saabhaasa* (with implication) buddhi did not combine with the prana, it could not arouse the shareer. So, both the buddhi – meaning, the pragna – and the prana are a joint upadhi. Only the combination of pragna and prana is an upadhi.

The pragna and prana are *saha-bhaava* (equal companions) in *mrityu* (death) and *jeevana* (life). Therefore, both are one in the *sookshmataa* (subtleness). The action of arousing is done through the prana, so it should be meditated upon in the form of the Uktha. This gives *e'kaagrataa* (single-pointed focus) to the *chitta* (mental inclination). When the chitta becomes focused it becomes capable of obtaining bodha about the Tattva.

The prana is the cause of the world, and so it is an *upalakshana* (indicative factor) of the Atma. In the deep sleep state the indriyas (five sense organs and the five organs of action) and the *mana* (emotional mind) along with all their objects – meaning, the entire interactive world – are merged into the *praanopaadhika* (that, which has the upadhi of the prana) Atma.

The Shruti has stated clearly that this world is the *adhibhoota* (gross form), the Devtas are the *adhidaiva* (subtle form) and the indriyas are the *adhyaatma* (related to the Supreme spirit). All the *loka* (worlds) have been created by the indriyas and the Devtas. That is why, when they become *leena* (merged), the whole world becomes leena.

If it were questioned, that only the indriyas are merged during the deep sleep state, but the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) are not, this is not correct. This world is only a perception. Being unaware is *laya* (merging; dissolving). The fact is, when the *upaadaana kaarana* (the substance of which something is made) is *jada* (inert; lacking consciousness) or *parinaamee* (has a result; concludes), the sense objects cannot be accepted as being merged; even an ordinary person is aware of them.

However, where the substance of which the world is made is the chetan Atma-Brahman, or the *nirvikaara sat* (the pure existence that is not subject to deterioration), the form of the world is nothing but the consciousness of its existence.

It is only at the time of *vive'ka* (discrimination between the eternal and the transient) that the world can be called *kaarya* (effect), *drishya* (that which is perceived), or *bhogy*a (that, which is enjoyed). The truth is that nothing exists except the swarup of Gnan. Therefore, in the principle of Vedanta, pragna, prana, indriya, Devta, and vishay are all mere perceptions. Awareness and lack of awareness is created in the waking state.

Now, the question is that a sleeping person has no perception of the prana while in the deep sleep state. Very well; the answer is, the word prana is accepted only during interaction, from the viewpoint of another. The word prana is an indication of the Atma.

The Shruti states clearly that during the waking state, it is from our Atma that the senses are created, like sparks of fire. The presiding deities of the senses are created from the senses, and from them are born the worlds of forms of the organs of the senses.

A *brahmaanubhavee* (one who had experienced the Brahman) sees this *drishti* – *srishti* (the world created by these perceptions) with great respect.

Definitely, just as the dream state vanishes in the waking state, this interactive world disappears when a person gets Brahmagnan. By the same token, *mrityu* (death), *moorcchaa* (unconsciousness), Samadhi and other states must also be accepted as merging into the awareness or lack of awareness.

The *krama* (serial order) of the revival of the world that was in a state of laya is described. When the jeevatma that has the upadhi of the prana has a wish to interact, the vaak creates the *shabda* (words; speech). The jeeva utters that shabda through the vaak. This krama is the same on all the indriyas and that is why everything is obtained in the prana. The purport of *sarvaprapti* (obtaining everything) in the prana means that everything is obtained in the pragna, because the pragna is not separate from the prana.

Just as the activating of the vaak has its refuge in the prana, a part of the pragna has its refuge in the *abhimaana* (subtle pride of individuality) in the jeeva. Therefore, the vaak is directed by the prana, and all other indriyas function in the same way.

The *dhye`ya* (object of meditation), *gne`ya* (that, which is known), and *bhogya* (that, which is enjoyed) all have the same method of working. No indriya has any activity that does not contain the abhiman that is a part of the pragna, and the arousing that is a part of the prana. Everything should be understood by the method of *anvaya-vyatire`ka* (relationship – separateness).

The jeeva speaks with the pragna riding on the faculty of speech. He says, 'My mind was wandering, that is why I could not speak.' The subtle pride of saying, 'I will speak' is called *vaagaarooha* (the pragna riding on the faculty of the vaak).

'I will think' is when the subtle pride of being the thinker rides on the intellect. This is called *chitaarooha*'. Abhiman is a *vritti* (mental inclination) of the pragna, and so is dhyana. This is why pragna first gets the subtle pride and then does dhyana.

At the time of *laya* (merging) and *utpatti* (creation) the whole world is situated in the prana. At the time of *sthiti* (state of existing) the whole world is situated in the pragna. Pragna and prana are the main upadhis of the Atma. It is through them that a person who has discrimination should begin to understand the swarup of the jeevatma.

The Shruti gives a clear guidance and command, 'What are vaak and its vishay? Don't have a wish to know the vaak.'

The point is, whatever is spoken by the vaak has a *kartaa* (doer), because speaking is a *kriyaa* (action), like farming. And, 'I am the karta' is a direct personal experience. Nobody can have an *ahambhaava* (feeling of identification) that 'I am the shabda' or 'I am the *sparsha* (sense of touch)'. Nobody can have *ahambhava* for any one indriya or a group of indriyas, or in this body made of multiple objects, because they are *mamataaspada* (objects for which a person has possessive affection), and are seen as being 'mine'.

The ahankara pervades the whole body from tip to toe. This is the *shuddha che`tana* (pure consciousness) and *aabhaasa che`tana* (the consciousness that shows illusion; perception) – that are called the *chidbimba* (pure consciousness) and *chit-pratibimba* (the reflection of pure consciousness) – that are used to pervade the intellect, and the person becomes a karta.

In interaction, the chetan is called *kriyaavaana* (active). Actually, the ahankara pervaded by consciousness is the karta. Thus, a person should first meditate on the chetan that contains the prana and the pragna – meaning, the jeevatma – and use *vive`ka* (discrimination between the eternal and the transient), and then separate the Paramatma that is pure consciousness, and the form of anand.

It is the buddhi that contains the perceptions that is called the jeeva. The jeeva interacts in this world and is considered to be the karta-bhokta. This is the *ahamkriti* (the subtle pride that makes a person feel he is the doer of the action) that is a reflection of the Atma. It is in the reflection that the vivek of the *vilakshana saakshee* (the witness without attributes) should be done.

The *saakshee* (witness) is the shuddha Brahman, because space, time and matter are all imposed on the shuddha sakshi Brahman. In the form of the *graahya* (that which is absorbed), it is the *bhoota-tanmaatraa* (the subtle forms of the five elements of which all matter is made), and as the *graahaka* (the one who absorbs), it is the *pragnaa – tanmaatraa* (the subtle form of the right perception) that sustains the world.

The things absorbed by the beings are the body, the objects of the senses, etc; and the things absorbed by the pragna are the mental inclinations and the indriyas. Both these departments are imagined in the Atma-Tattva. Just as the rim of a wheel is dependent on the spokes and the spokes on the rim, the vishays and indriyas are codependent. Prana is the cause of the imagined efforts and pragna is the cause of the imagined vrittis. The substratum of both impositions is the Paramatma who is anand-swarup.

The one who glitters as the most-loved in our life – and in the life of each person – is the Paramatma whose swarup is eternal anand. The Paramatma is *ajara* (not subject to ageing) and *amrita* (not subject to death). He does not become a Devta because of *punya* (spiritual merit earned by good deeds), or an animal because of *paapa* (sinful acts). It is the ahankara combined with the chidabhasa that is a *paapee* (sinner) or a *punyaatmaa* (a person with spiritual merit). The paapa – punya are of the ahankara. The old age and death are of the body.

An *agnaanee* (one who lacks Gnan) person imposes them on his *nitya-shuddha-buddha-mukta* (eternal-pristine-enlightened-liberated) sakshi swarup, and that is why he obtains forms like a Devta or an animal, depending on his deeds.

These superimpositions are negated by the bodha of the Brahman and the Atma being one. *Baadha* (negation) means the certainty of something being *mithyaa* (a relative truth; not an eternal existence that can never be negated); it does not mean becoming unaware of the existence of the things that are transient. After that, karmas become like seeds that have been roasted, that no longer have the capacity to sprout. The pure essence of the Atma that is the untainted Paramatma is no longer subject to the *sansara* (this interactive world).

The Atma neither increases nor diminishes by karmas. '*Na saadhunaa karmanaa bhooyaan.*' The question is that although there is no *kaaryopaadhi* (attribute of being the effect) in the Paramatma, there is certainly the *kaaranopadhi* (the attribute of being the cause). That being the case, why is there no karma in Him?

The answer is, the Paramatma is the *karmaadhyaksha* (the director of karmas), not the karta of the karmas. He makes the agnani who He considers His own swarup to undertake punya-karmas through the *aabhaasa* (illusion of the world being real) and sends them to Swarga. He makes others undertake paapa-karmas and sends them to Narak. It is by His proximity that the antahkarana gets desires and acts accordingly. This is called '*parjanya nyaaya*' – the justice of clouds – in the Shastras.

Clouds shower rain to help seeds grow. Some seeds grow well and fast, others feebly, and some rot. The rain is not to blame for the difference. The superior or inferior growth is because of the quality of the seed. Similarly, people go to Swarga or Narak depending on the desires in their heart. Their actions are lofty or lowly, depending on their desires. The Paramatma gives only proximity; he does not give them *kartritva* (the subtle pride of being the doer).

The Paramatma fosters all beings like a mother. He instructs them like a father. He rules over them like a Master. The Atma is the Paramatma. It is with the upadhi of *maayaa* (the power of illusion) that it seems as if the Paramatma is doing everything. In spite of the Paramatma having the upadhi of Maya, He knows that it is mithya.

The agnani jeeva does not know the *mithyaatva* (false nature) of Maya. The difference is in Gnan-agnan, not in the Paramartha swarup. The fact is, whether you call it the Atma or the Paramatma, it is only the unchanging param-anand.

Gnan-agnan is what creates the difference between the jeeva and the Ishwara. In the Paramartha there is no difference. It is from the viewpoint of the agnani jeeva that – the worldly individual – that this Paramartha Satya is called the Sarveshwara – the Ishwara of all. From the viewpoint of our own Atma, it is the *nitya-shuddha-buddha-mukta- akhanda-e`karasa aananda* (the eternal-pristine-enlightened-liberated-unbroken-unchanging bliss). Pratardan! Know the Atma!

Pratardan was *krita-kritya* (fulfilled; successful) by listening to this teaching that Indra gave him out of compassion.

Chapter 9.

Anubhav = Aparoksha.

[Anubhav means experience. Aparoksha means a direct personal experience that is not obtained through the senses.]

Anubhav is never *paroksha* (not perceived). It is always aparoksha.

When an object that is not *poorna* (complete in itself) is experienced it becomes paroksha (something that cannot be known through the senses) at the same time, in the same place, in the same form.

A *vishaya-vastu* (object of the senses) is paroksha. Because of the *taadaatmya adhyaasa* (a superimposed identification), the anubhav seems to be paroksha.

The anubhav of a *paripoorna* (complete within itself) *vastu* (object; the Atma) is never paroksha in any state, place, or time, as the form of something paroksha. It has no scope for being paroksha. The fact is, anubhav and the vishay-vastu are not separate in the *paripoornataa* (being poorna), and so there is no opportunity for anything to be paroksha.

It is because of this that there is no need for *smriti* (remembering; memory) in the paripoorna anubhav. When the object that is the form of experience is *saakshaat aparoksha* (experienced directly, but not through the senses), how can there be a memory? Memory is of that which is experienced in the past, in another place, in another form. The person experienced it the previous day and remembered it the next day. It was seen in another place and is being remembered in this place. The memory of the paroksha is certainly true. The paripoorna, *akhanda* (eternal) Atma-Brahman is never paroksha at any time, or in any place. Therefore, if the *bhrama* (false understanding) – or *agnaana andhakaara* (the darkness of ignorance) – is dispelled just once, the Atma-vastu is never paroksha; nor is there any need to remember it.

It is not that there is no need for *smarana* (remembering) for *brahmaanubhooti* (the direct personal experience of the Brahman) alone; there is no need for smaran even in *sahaja vairaagya* (a natural detachment for worldly matters). This point should be kept in mind. Absence of *raaga* (attachment) and *dve'sha* (aversion) is vairagya. The substance that has no real

existence, but is perceived as real, is not separate from the Brahman that is the substratum of everything.

Raaga-dvesha is always *savishayaka* (having an object). That means it is only for some perceived object for which a person gets attachment or aversion. If you begin to think about vairagya it will be either with raaga or with dvesha. 'I gave up so much wealth. I did not get attached to my family, relatives, or friends. I developed no dvesha in spite of people being so unfair to me.' This kind of smaran is the smaran of the *sansara* (interactive world). Therefore, people who have vairagya remain free of worldly attachments and aversions in the present tense. Nor do they think about vairagya of the past. The *svaroopa* (essence or true form) of a Mahatma is *saakshaat-aparoksha-adviteeya* (the non-dual Atma incarnate). Vairagya is their natural state.

One day, a worldly *jignaasu* (seeker of knowledge) asked, 'Maharaj, earlier you used to lie under a tree in the forest. You did not open your eyes to look around. Why don't you live like that now?'

The Mahatma replied, 'My brother, was that good or is this good? To remember that state is a deliberate action of the mind. Smriti is that of a *vishaya* (object). That *sthit*i (state) was artificial. This state is natural.

Yathaa tathaa yatra tatra sama e`vaavatishtate`.

(Consciousness is present without being connected to time or place.)

Chapter 10.

The Amritanubhav of Sant Gnandev.

Sant Gnandev was born in Maharashtra about the year 1332. He is accepted as an Avatar of Bhagwan Vishnu. He wrote a book called Amritanubhav (the experience of the elixir that bestows immortality) in poetry form, using a meter called ovi, to establish the principle of *ke`vala advaita* (pure non-duality). This is similar to the anushtup chandan used in Sanskrit verse. The text has twenty sections. Piercing logic and touching experiences give a lofty description of the *ajaata-siddhaanta* – the eternal principle of Advaita, the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists.

The Brahmagita, which is a part of the Suta Samhita, says that this world of name and form that is perceived, is the *paripoorna* (complete) Shiva. When someone perceives this as a direct personal experience, his state becomes a form of worship of Shiva. His natural behavior is the *akhanda* (unbroken) *brahmasvaroopa* (essence or true form of the Brahman). His erratic temperament is Shiva-pooja – the worship of Shiva.

It is stated clearly that the *svaroopa-chaitanya* (the consciousness of the Self) manifests joyously in the forms of the *pancha-bhoota* (five elements, earth, water, fire, air and space). The three worlds (nether world, earth and Swarga) made of the five elements are also *chinmaatra* (pure consciousness).

‘I am also chinmatra. I am the *svatah-siddha* (self-established) *aatma-samve`dana* (perception of the Atma). It is by the *aatma-sfoorana* (pulsation of the Atma) that a person is aware of the world. *Chaitanya* (consciousness) is eternal and non-dual. It has not even a whiff of *bhe`da* (separateness).

The feeling, ‘I am a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) is caused by *bhraanti* (false understanding). Therefore, it is *mithyaa* (a relative truth; not an eternal object that can never be negated). Whether it is in the form of a *ghata* (pot) or *pata* (piece of cloth), or seen in any other form, the separateness is mere perception. Only the *sat-prakaasha* (the effulgence that is eternal existence) is the *vastu* (object; the Atma).

A person gets the bhram that the *jada* (inert matter) is *che`tana* (having consciousness) because of *agnaana* (lack of Gnan about the Atma being the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists). This is called the *chit-jada-granthi* (the imaginary knot between the consciousness and inert matter that deludes a person into believing that other things, apart from the

Atma, are Satya). This results in *chidaabhaasa* (an illusion that the objects of the world have consciousness). This happens only to those who lack *vive`ka* (discrimination between the eternal and the transient).

The fact is there is neither *bandha* (worldly bondage) nor Moksha (liberation from worldly matters). The world is not created; nor does it merge into nothingness. Read this statement of the Varaha Upanishad:

Agnaaname`va na kuto jagatah pravrittirjeeve`sha-de`shikavikalpakathaatoore`,

e`kaanta-ke`vala-chide`karasa-svabhaave` brahmaiva ke`valamaham paripooramasmī.

When there is no agnan in the unchanging, non-dual *vastu-tattva* (the element or true form of the object, the Atma), how can there be *pravritti-nivritti* (activity – withdrawal from activity)? Discussion about the separateness of the jeeva, Ishwara and the Guru are part of the state of a lack of vivek. I am only the Tattva that is the paripoorna, non-dual Parabrahma. Due to the complete absence of Brahmagnan, only the consciousness of the Atma is the *sattattva* (the Tattva that is eternal existence). Shri Sureshvara Acharya, author of the Vartika, has said the same thing.

Sade`ve`tyaadivaakye`bhyah kritsnavastu yatodvayam,

sambhavastadviruddhasya kutokritsnasya vastunah.

The Shruti (Vedic verse) of the Chandogya Upanishad has established that *sade`va somya idamagra aaseet`* (The Truth always existed even before Creation, my son) and other statements that the perceived *kritsna vastu* (whole; unlimited) is non-dual. How can there be an *akritsna vastu* contrary to this?

It is certain that there is no *pramaana* (proof) regarding agnan – neither *laukika* (social) nor Vedic. In the *paramaatha* (Supreme Truth) both *utpatti* (creation) and *nirodha* (prohibition) are forbidden.

The Annapurna Upanishad says,

Naasti chittam na chaavidyaa na mano na cha jaavakah,

brahmaive`kamanaadyantamabdhivat pravijimbhate` . 1

Gacchatastishthato vaapi jaagritah svapatopi vaa,

na vichaaraparam che`to yasya somrita uchyate` . 2

There is no *chitta* (mental inclination), and no *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the world to be an eternal truth). There is no *mana* (emotional mind), and no *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual). It is the Brahman that pulsates like an ocean that has no beginning and no end, and no duality. The Satpurusha (enlightened Mahatma) is *amrita* (the elixir of immortality); his chitta never gets trapped in worldly matters.

The Tejobindu Shruti says,

Yad yaduktam puraane`shu yad yadve`shu nirnayah,

sarvopanishadaam bhaavah sarva shashavishaanavat.1

Sarva brahme`ti naastye`va brahma ityapi naasti hi,

chiditye`ve`ti naastye`va chidaha bhaashanam nahi. 2.

Everything that is written in the *puraana* (ancient texts on religion) and established by the Vedas, and the accepted purport of the Upanishads, is mithya, like horns on a rabbit. To say, 'Everything is the Brahman' is also mithya. The word 'Brahman' is also mithya. Even the statement, 'only the Chit exists' is also not true. 'I am the chinmatra,' is also not said!

This is the statement of Sarvagnatma Muni:

Bahu nigadya kimatra vadaamyaham shrunuta sangrahamadvayashaasane`,

sakalavaangmanasaatigataa chitih sakalavaangmanasavyavahaarabhaak.

What am I to establish regarding this, by elaborating through statements and counter-statements? Listen to a small collection of the Advaita Shastra.

'The Chit-Tattva is beyond all *vaanee* (power of speech) and the mana; and the subject of all interaction that is beyond all *vani* and the mana is the Chit-Tattva.'

This is the preamble given at the beginning and end of the translation from Marathi to Sanskrit. Shri Gnandev has saluted the Guru-Tattva (the essence of true form of the Guru) and *parama* (supreme) Tattva before saying that the cause of the world is the Tattva that has no *upaadhi* (attributes). It Itself Is. It can be called Shiva, the Purusha, or by any other name.

The question is the Tattva is only one. How can it be the cause of the world if it has no upadhi?

Actually, the Tattva is called one only because of the need for duality. This oneness is a substratum of the *jagata-kalpanaa* (imagining the world). When we see our self from a personal viewpoint, we perceive our self as the *vishayee* (the one who enjoys sense objects), who sees, whereas it is the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) that is seen. This is the only path for resolving the problem of Creation. There is no other way.

In the *anubhava-patha* (the path of experience) we have no *abhaava* (absence of existence; non-existence). Our Self is perceived in the forms of the *bhoktaa* (the one who enjoys the objects of the senses) and the *bhogya* (that, which is enjoyed). The Self is the *gnataa* (knower) and also the *gne`ya* (that, which is known). The *paramaarthaa roopa* (form of the Supreme truth) of the *drashtaa* (the one who sees; the Atma) is the same as that of the *drishya* (that, which is seen). Therefore, our Self itself is the gnata-gneya and bhokta-bhogya. There is no connection with other upadhis, and the upadhi itself also exists. The upadhi being separate is also only in name.

There is no *vikaara* (distortion; deterioration); the drishya is perceived. Let a million upadhis be perceived, the Tattva is free of all upadhis. Then, what is the *vandanaa* (prayer)?

The *stheti* (state) that is free of the differences between 'you' and 'me' is the vandana. Before that, the *vanditaa* (one who prays) is the same, and after that, the *vandaneeya* (the one who is prayed to) is the same.

Shiva is the *aadi* (origin), Shiva is the *madhya* (middle) and Shiva is the *anta* (end). Atma and anubhuti are two words, but the *vastu* (object) is one, and it is the *adviteeya satya* (non-dual pure existence that can never be negated).

Sant Gnaneshwara has given a detailed account of this in his auspicious opening verses. Duality is perceived in the non-dual Shiva; it is not factual. This is amazing! This is wonderful! The entire perception of duality is an illusion perceived by the Self. It is the *nirdvandva* (undisputed) *sukha* (happiness with contentment) that glimmers in the form of duality. Just as there is fragrance in camphor, there is this *dvaita-leelaa* (the play of duality) in the advaita.

If someone says that the *gudatva* (quality of guda, meaning jaggery) is in guda, or that *maadhurya* (sweetness) is in the *madhura* (sweet items), the use of options is merely to support the truth. The *sandhi* (joining; meeting point) of that, which is illuminated, and that, which illuminates, is not like that of two pieces of a broken pot being joined to make it whole. It is only chinmatra. To see the chinmatra is also not just seeing!

What are the drashta-drishya in the *drigmaatra* (seeing; pure vision)?

This Gnan is not the *pratiyogee* (opponent) of agnan; it is Gnan-swarup. It is only when the interactive world is negated that the *abhinna* (not separate) vastu – the Atma – is established. If someone so desires, *bhe`da* (separateness) will have to be imagined in the innate *abhe`da* (lack of bheda). To try to establish abheda when abheda already exists is pointless.

Therefore, only where there is a false understanding of duality is the *pramaa* (true perception) successful. The advaita-pramaa exists because of the need to remove the false understanding of duality. The vastu is abheda; no effort is needed to create it. That, which is created by effort, is always *anitya* (not eternal).

Therefore, the perception of separateness may be *svaroopa-abhimukha* (turned towards the inner Self) or *prapancha-abhimukha* (turned towards the interactive world), it is *nirupaadhika* (free of attributes). This perception, meaning the *sfurana* (pulsation) that is free of bheda-abheda is the cause of the world. In worldly interaction this is known as the Prakriti (Nature) and the Purusha (the non-dual Atma). The *pramaataa* (one who establishes), *prame`ya* (that, which is established) etc come within the same lineage. This is the special feature of Sant Gnanesh's method of ascertainment.

In the opinion of Sant Gnandev, it is the non-dual *shuddha chaitanya* (pure consciousness) that is imagined as the form of the cause of the world. There is no need to imagine that the cause of the world is some factor that lacks consciousness. Pure consciousness has no need to establish itself through any cause or example. The *chitta* (mental inclination) is the *panchabhoota* (the five elements), the *chitta* is *bhuvanatraya* (the three worlds; the nether world, the earth, and Swarga). The Atma is the Chit.

CHARU CHINTAN

Part III.

Karma.

Chapter I

Dharma.

The Basis of Dharma.

Worldly knowledge and the investigation of the objects of the world are known as *vignaana* (acquired knowledge). Gnan about *karma* (actions; rituals prescribed by the Shastras) and the investigation of the different aspects of karma is called *dharma-adharma vignaana* (acquired knowledge about Dharma – that, which is contrary to Dharma).

The *saadhaarana* (common or general) Dharma applies to the *upaadaana* (substance of which an object is made), predominantly of the *sacchidaananda* (Sat = existence + Chit = consciousness + Anand = joy: the Brahman), *advaya* (non-dual) *brahma-svaroop* (the essence or true form of the Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists). The fact is the *moola-tattva* (fundamental element) of the entire *prapancha* (interactive world) is the Parabrahm Paramatma – the supreme Atma of all. Therefore, it is a companion of every individual, at all times, in every place, and in every object.

The common Dharma is always essential, everywhere, for every kind of *adhikaaree* (kind of eligibility of the individual). It is seen clearly at times, and glimpsed occasionally at times. Where *poornataa* (being complete) is seen to be developed, it is seen in a greater proportion. It is seen in a smaller proportion where Dharma is less developed. There is no distinction in poornata; the distinction is in the manner of its manifestation.

Dharma and adharma increase and decrease in sensate and insensate objects. The greatest development of poornata is in the human form. The general – or common – dharma (sense of what is right) is inherent in all humans. In the development of this, the *jeevana* (life) comes from the Sat (pure existence), knowledge comes from the Chit (pure consciousness), and *sukha* (happiness with contentment) comes from the Anand of the Brahman.

Advayataa (non-duality) manifests in the forms of *abhe`da* (not being separate) and universal benevolence. It is the natural Dharma of all humans to give *jeevana-daana* (the gift of life), *sukha-daana* (the gift of happiness) and *pre`ma-daana* (the gift of love). Differences are seen or perceived, in this.

Dharma-adhikara is only for humans.

The eligibility to do Dharma is called *dharma-adhikaara*. Only humans have this qualification. Every substance has dharma; it has its essential nature. Because it manifests differently, there is a degree of mutual *vaidharmya* (difference in the intrinsic characteristics). Some substance is a cause of disease and another is a cure for the disease. Some are sweet and some sour. Some dark and some light colored. There is no need to enumerate these characteristics.

The creation of a *manushya shareera* (human form) is *aghahsrota* (growing downwards). Trees are *oordhvasrota* (growing upwards). Birds and animals are *tiryaksrota* (growing horizontally).

The meaning of this is that in this world created by Brahmaji, the greatest skill of his creation has manifested in the human form. If a human being fails to take shelter in the *vishe`sha* Dharma (the Dharma that applies only to human beings) he will have to accept a birth in a lower form, either in a *tiryak yoni* (bird or animal species), or as an *oordhva srota* (of the plant species), because the *pada* (position; status) is according to the qualification of the individual, depending on his karmas (actions).

The two hands of a human being tell us that he is a *karma-adhikaaree* (qualified for doing karmas). The novel inventions of humans tell us about the special *buddhi* (intellect) of humans. The creating of different fragrances, flavors, notes of music, touch, etc keeps developing new forms of *sukha* (happiness with contentment) and *vaasanaa* (desires). The interpersonal relationships are an indication of *aananda-bhaava* (feeling of joyfulness), *pre`ma-bhaava* (the feeling of love), and *abhe`da-bhaava* (the feeling of not being separate).

Under the circumstances, if a human being fails to use his special abilities in the right and proper manner, he slips from his upward progress and falls to a lower status of existence. The purport is a human being has the capacity to use his natural potential to attain a higher level of existence by taking refuge in the dharma natural for humans. If he fails to do this, he will fall. He will be expelled from the higher status of his human birth. The conclusion is that a human being can use his natural abilities and obtain the highest benefit, or else, invite downfall by failing to use it.

The vishesh Dharma is needed to prevent human potential for an enhanced existence from being wasted, in order that he succeeds in manifesting his innate *poornataa* (being complete).

The Nimitta of Dharma.

The substance of which this interactive world is made can be called the Brahman, Prakriti (Nature), *paramaanu* (atoms), *pudgala* (the soul), *shoonya* (a vacuum), *vignaana* (acquired knowledge), *bhoota-chatushtaya* (the four elements) or anything else. It is the state previous to the manifestation of *bhe`da* (separateness). When *bheda* appears, our equality in the separate objects is inherent in them. *Vivarta* (altered condition), *parinaama* (the end result) or beginning – none of them can be divided into *dharma – adharma* (Dharma – that, which is contrary to Dharma) from the viewpoint of the fundamental Tattva (element that is the Atma, not separate from the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists). The reaction seen in all *kaarya* (effect) is the same. Therefore, the division of Dharma-adharma becomes essential in everything a human being does with the subtle pride of being the doer.

This is not from the viewpoint of the *upaadaana* (substance of which the objects are made); it is from the viewpoint of *anushaasana* (rules; discipline). Whatever it may be, the substance of which the object is made is not the cause of Dharma-adharma; the cause is *vidhi-nishe`dha* (instituted – prohibited) given by the Shastras (ancient religious texts), that are applicable regardless of the *de`sha* (place), *kaala* (time), *samaaja* (society), *jaati* (caste), *sampradaaya* (religious sect), *avasthaa* (state) *vaya* (age), *shakti* (strength), *buddhi* (intellect), etc that are different.

Change is natural in the *bhe`da-srishti* (the different objects that are created), and the *kriyaa* (actions) done with *kartritva* (the subtle pride of being the doer). A human is independent only in what he does and what he does not do. No object, like gold or silver, is wicked. Matter has no connection with Dharma-adharma, but the decision to accept or reject it depends on the individual. That is why Dharma-adharma is connected to the actions of a person. No man or woman is naturally corrupt. It is Dharma-adharma that tells us who is eligible for having a relationship with, and who isn't. Dharma-

adharma applies to the indulgence being in keeping with that, which is right and proper.

The purport is that vidhi-nishedh is given to teach a person to use his freedom of choice to do what is right, and avoid what is wrong. Dharma-adharma is created by adhering to, or flouting the rules. A capricious action can give an instant feeling of an illusory sukha, but it enslaves a person to the pleasurable object, place, time, time, action, or indulgence in future. Capricious, unrestrained actions are the basic causes of people's worldly bondage.

Actions are controlled by discipline. The fruits of regulated and disciplined actions are sweet. Such actions are called vishesh Dharma. This does not come into a person's life automatically; a person has to make an effort to cultivate the right kind of life.

Vishesh Dharma regulates an *adhikaaree* (eligible person), *sankalpa* (a formal resolve), materials for a religious ritual done in the prescribed manner, and *samagrataa* (wholeness). Even one *anga* (part; limb) of Dharma gives fruit, but if done faultily it results in a *pratyavaaya* (adverse reaction; harm). The entire Dharma gives the entire fruit when the time is ripe. The fruit remains in the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality) of the *kartaa* (the doer) in the form of an *apoorva* (latent fruit) until the time is ripe.

The *vihit* (ordained; prescribed) control of karma is Dharma. The vihit control of desires is *upaasanaa* (loving worship). The vihit control of *vritti* (mental inclinations) is Yoga (becoming connected to the Atma).

No *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) can result in the form of the *saadhya* (the goal of sadhana) without self-restraint. Just as milk turns into curds when set correctly, and butter is made from it, when karma is done in the prescribed method it becomes Dharma, and gives sukha.

The method of karma is vidhi-nishedh. In upasana the methods are *aavaahana* (invoking) and *visarjana* (relinquishing). In Yoga, the method is *abhyaasa* (practice) and *vairagya* (detachment), and in Tattvagnan, the method is

adhyaropa (superimposition) and *apavaada* (negation). All these are different methods used in sadhana and are similar. The common factor is that the *moola vastu* (fundamental object; the Atma) is unchanged.

Karma, upasana, Yoga and Gnan are used as methods for seeking the moola vastu or investigating it. They are all connected in the forms of *parampara* (traditional handing down of spiritual knowledge from Guru to disciple), or *bahiranga-antaranga* (external-internal) forms, and they all proceed in the same direction.

The Srishti (Creation) of Name and Form, and the Vedas.

It has been stated that the common Dharma has the predominance of the world's fundamental substance – the sacchidananda non-dual Brahman. The special Dharma has the predominance of the *nimitta-kaarana* (instrumental cause), which is *anushaasana* (discipline; obeying the rules).

Just as creation is *anaadi* (without a beginning; eternal), so is *drishti* (vision). Just as the form of the world is anadi and *nitya* (perpetual) in the forms like a flowing river, the world of names is also without a beginning or end. Just as form is changeable in the basic substance, so are the names. The department of *naama-roopa* (name-form) comes within the *kaaryaavasthaa* (the state of the effect), not in the *kaaranaavasthaa* (the state of the cause). Therefore, at the time of *pralaya* (Dissolution) the world of name and form merges into the formless Brahman. They emerge at the time of Srishti (Creation).

The name and form are basically one Tattva. They are not divided in the *paraavaanee* (sound starting in the naval; the thought before speech manifests), and so, when a *drashtaa* (one who sees) sees objects, the words that give them a name appear simultaneously. That is why the Veda-vani (the words of the Vedas) is not created; it is seen. The meaning of the word *rishi* in Sanskrit is also a drashta – a Seer. Just as Srishti arises with the proximity of the Ishwara, so does the succession of the Vedas. This is why the Vedas are called *anaadi-nidhana* (eternal-death), *nitya* (perpetual) and unchanging.

The Proof of the Vedas – Absence of Characteristics.

The *paramaarthasvaroop* (essence or true form of the Supreme) of Gnan is also the Paramartha swarup of the Vedas. Gnan has no Creator – not the

Ishwara, nor a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual), because Gnan is required for creating anything. If anyone creates something, it will be according to the knowledge he has. Even the division of the Ishwara and the jeeva is established by Gnan.

The Vedas are *apaurushe`ya* (not written by a human being) because there is no trace of human error in the Vedas like *bhrama* (false understanding), *pramaada* (forgetfulness), *vipralipsaa* (deceit), *karnapaatava* (incompetence of the senses) etc. The Vedas are not the *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) obtained by worldly experience. Gnan of the Vedas is a *nitya-siddha* (eternally established) vignan and it is the only *pramaana* (proof) in the ascertainment of Dharma.

The decision regarding what is Dharma and what is adharma, is done in accordance with the Vedic vignan. It is not necessary to point out that this level of gravity and depth is not found in the books of other religious philosophies. Therefore no other religious books can be considered to be of the same level as the Vedas.

The Vedas are not a special *grantha* (book) that affirms the Dharma of any particular *sampradaaya* (religious tradition, handed down from Guru to disciple); they are the eternal *dharma-bodha* (incandescent understanding of righteousness). The essence of eternal righteousness is not bound by considerations of the Nation, group, gender, or society. The Vedas give directions for the appropriate Dharma for all Nations, all times, and all people, according to their eligibility.

The sum total of the teaching of the Vedas defines *padaartha* (substance; matter) in two ways.

1. The description of the Siddha Vastu.
2. The description of the *saadhya-vastu* (the object that the effort is being made for) and the methods for obtaining it.

The first is the Brahman, and the second is Dharma.

A person can obtain *saakshaatkaara* (a direct personal experience) of the Siddha Vastu, and the removal of *avidyaa* (nescience; wrong knowledge)

regarding it. *Vidyaa* (knowledge) about the object removes the avidya regarding it.

The Brahma-vidya (knowledge about the Brahman; enlightenment) is *brahmaatmaikyavignaana* (acquired knowledge that the Brahman and the Atma are one). It is the *pratignaa* (pledge) of the Vedas that the vignan of one gives the vignan of all. The example given is that of gold being the same in the different ornaments.

The *mahaa-vaakya* (ultimate statement of the Vedas) states clearly that the Atma is not separate from the Brahman. Therefore, Brahma-vidya – meaning, the comprehensive understanding of the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma – is the negation of *bhe`da* (separateness).

The non-dual Brahman is the Siddha Vastu. The Vedas explain this for any person who has achieved eligibility by acquiring *shama* and *dama* (restraint of the senses and the mind), etc.

People whose *drishti* (vision) has become identified with our creation of separateness have become like inert matter, because of the agnan about the *siddha-svaroopaa* (eternally established essence) of the Brahma-Atma. That is why those who believe themselves to be a *kartaa* (doer), *bhoktaa* (the one who experiences pleasure and pain), *sansaaree* (of the interactive world), *parichhinna* (separate from the Atma) are trapped in the net of the interactive world. To free them from this state, the motherly *bhagavati shruti* (divine Vedic verses) gives the teaching of the *krama-maarga* (the serial methods for spiritual progress). The start of the *krama* (serial order) is blocking unrestrained behavior.

Dushcharitra (an impure character), *durvaasanaa* (impure desires), *durguna* (impure tendencies), *chanchalataa* (fickleness) etc are the *dosha* (faults) that must be eliminated in order to purify the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind or subtle body composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality). A *shuddha* (pure) antahkarana makes the person worthy of the sakshatkara of the Siddha Vastu. This is the task of Dharma. Accepting the krama of Dharma-*saadhanaa* (the effort for spiritual progress by following Dharma) is the foundation of a *sampradaaya* (traditional teaching of a religious sect, handed from Guru to

disciple). The *saadhana* (methods) are many; the fruit of the sadhans is antahkarana shuddhi. A pure antahkarana is the *saadhya* (goal).

Religious rituals create a mental inclination for the form of the sadhya and make it stable. A mental inclination for that, which is shuddha, is a flow of pure thoughts. It is in this that a *jignaasaa* (wish to know) about the shuddha Tattva, and removal of *bhrama* (false understanding) is achieved through the *mahaa-vaakya* (ultimate statements of the Vedas that propound the oneness of the Atma and the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists). This gives birth to the *pramaa* (right perception). The prama becomes redundant after destroying bhram. It is negated in the swarup.

The Actual Purpose of Dharma: Purifying the Atma.

Five points must be kept in mind for antahkarana-shuddi.

1. Karma shuddhi (purity of actions).
2. Bhoga shuddhi (purity of indulgence).
3. Bhava shuddhi (purity of intention).
4. Ahamta shuddhi (purity of the ego and possessiveness).
5. Shuddha chintan (purity of thoughts).

The antahkarana is created by the *chintana* (thoughts), and so when the chintan is shuddha the antahkarana also becomes shuddha. The *kalpita vastu* (imagined objects) have to be given up, to obtain a direct personal experience of the *paramaatha* (supreme goal) that is the Satya-vastu – the Atma that can never be negated. *Dharma-anushthaana* (religious rituals) have some *anga* (parts). Undertaking religious rituals helps in gathering the wealth of the qualities that make a person eligible. One of them is the *varna-vyavasthaa* (the arrangement of the four varnas, or social levels. (The Brahmins preserve and teach Dharma, the Kshatriyas protect the people, the Vaishyas look after trade and commerce and the Shudras render service to all three).

The Mandukya Upanishad describes the Tattva. It describes the Atma in four divisions for the sake of sadhan – the method used for spiritual progress – and siddhi (success).

The *vaishvaanara* (universal consciousness) is the *shoodra* (labor class). The *taijasa* (subtle world) is the vaishya. The *praagna* (pure intelligence) is the

Kshatriya, and the *tureeya* (when the soul merges into the Supreme) is the Brahmin.

The Shudra does *se`vaa* (renders service), the Vaishya does business, the Kshatriya does *upasamhaara* (kills in battle), and the Brahmin strives to obtain Tattvagnan. These are the *vrutti* (mental inclinations) of the four varnas.

The *krama* (serial order) of the *aashrama-vyavasthaa* (the arrangement of the ashrams or stages of life) are also four. Brahmacharya is the stage of a celibate student who studies. Grihastha is the stage of the married householder, Vanaprastha is the stage of a middle-aged person who retires from worldly activities and turns to spirituality. The last is Sanyas when the person renounces the world and becomes a Monk.

The Brahmachari is Vaishvanara, the Grihastha is Taijas, the Vanaprasthi is Pragna, and the Sanyasi is Turiya.

The *upaadhi* (attribute) of *jagrita-svapna* (the waking – dreaming states) superimposes *guna-dharma* (the tendencies natural to each individual) on the Atma. Similarly, the four varnas and ashramas also contain guna-dharma. The *vive`ka* (discrimination) of the Atma-*padaartha* (substance) is done by the *sthaanee* (resident; individual in that position) being in keeping with the *sthaana* (place; position). The antahkarana – is purified by meditating on the states of the *varnaashrama* (varna-ashram) system, and carrying out the duties appropriate to the Dharma that applies.

Chintana (giving deep thought) should be done along with *dharmaanushthaana* (religious rituals). This makes the buddhi pure, so that it identifies with the Atma. This is why Dharmagnan needs Dharmanushthana, and Dharmanushthana needs Dharmagnan. A person who does not understand *adhyaatma* (spiritual matters) properly will remain deprived of Vedanta and *karma-fala* (the fruit of karmas).

All the impurities created by prohibited karmanushthana (karmas done as a ritual) are in the antahkarana. There is no *ashuddhi* (impurity) in the Ishwara. The *guna-dosha* (good – bad qualities) in the Ishwara is perceived according to the *kalpana* (imagination) of the antahkarana. So much so that as long as there is *bhrama* (false understanding) in the antahkarana, and agnan – which is the

basic cause of bhram – *maayaa* (the power of illusion) is superimposed in the swarup of the Ishwara. The Ishwara free of Maya is the Brahman.

Therefore, Gnan for removing the curtain of the doshas by which the buddhi is covered, and Dharmanushthana for removing *mala-vikshe`pa* (impurities mental fickleness) are necessary for Dharma-vivek.

Dharma has four forms.

1. Nitya karma, meaning, daily rituals like the Sandhya Vandan.
2. Naimittik karma, meaning rituals done on special occasions, as on Sankranti or an eclipse.
3. Kamya karma, meaning rituals like Yagna-Yaag done for fulfilling desires like obtaining Swarga after death.
4. Prayashchitta karma, meaning penance done to atone for some faulty action done knowingly or unknowingly.

Each of the four is useful for antahkarana-shuddhi. They purify the antahkarana in four ways.

1. They destroy the *adhahpatana* (spiritual degeneration) caused by *pratyavaaya* (adverse reactions) created by wrong deeds.
2. They remove the mala-vikshepa caused by deeds of past births, this birth, and wrong company.
3. They create vairagya for *anaatma-chintana* (thinking about the transient objects that are not the Atma) inducing the person to think about the Atma. That means, they give *jignaasaa* (desire for knowledge) about the Atma.
4. Gnan is also obtained through them. Thus, Dharmanushthana takes our life close to *poornataa* (wholeness; being fulfilled).

Purushartha-Siddhi in Dharma

[There are four *purushaartha*, meaning primary goals in the life of a human being. They are Artha, meaning worldly success, Dharma, meaning adhering to the rules of the right kind of life, Kama, meaning the fulfillment of worldly desires, and Moksha, meaning liberation from worldly considerations.

Purushartha-siddhi means the successful accomplishment of all four.]

The antahkarana is purified even by the *sakaama-karma* (rituals done for some worldly goal) done according to the Shastras (ancient religious texts), because the antahkarana does not have the capacity to get the pleasure of other worlds like Swarga, Brahmaloaka, etc. Dharmanushthana gives an antahkarana that has the capacity to experience these pleasures. This antahkarana is separate from the gross physical form.

Sakama karmas remove all impurities of the antahkarana and create a shuddha, *saattvika* (virtuous) *shareera* (body; form). If by some chance vairagya arises in-between, the person obtains *saakshaatkaara* (a direct personal experience) of the *paramaarthasvaroopa* (the essence of the supreme goal, the Paramatma).

The objects of this world are absorbed through the *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of action). The desire to get them is called the Artha Purushartha. The objects are outside the mana and the body. Effort is needed to obtain them, and being separated from them is nature's law. A person becomes dependent in the process of obtaining them. He begins to identify with his possessions, and that leads to *jadataa* (stupidity). He feels dukha when he cannot obtain what he wants, and fears losing them even after obtaining them.

There is no *sukha* (happiness with contentment) even in Artha. Is there *sukha* in imagining wealth or amassing it? *Sukha* is absolutely a mental experience. External objects are imagined to be causes of mental experience. The objects give *sukha* at times and *dukha* at times, depending on the place, time, inclination, state, or a change of preference. This is why Artha is a Purushartha only if it is in keeping with the fulfillment of a person's desire. If not, it is a cause of *dukha*. Artha is not a principal Purushartha. It is a part of the Kama-Purushartha, so it is secondary.

Artha is external and Kama is internal. Kama stays in the antahkarana, not outside. It is the form of the mana, and therefore, its movements are unrestrained. The subtle subconscious impressions created by experiences, imagined and remote objects, *mamataa* (possessive attachment) to the things a person has, and pride of possessions, forgetting the Atma when engrossed in worldly pleasures, are all associates of the Kama-Purushartha.

It cannot be denied that there is sukha in all these. Experience establishes that pleasurable indulgence gives sukha. Then, should it be left to the *ruchi* (inclinations) of a person? Is it to the advantage of society as well as the individual if people were allowed to indulge in any object or person they find desirable? Such a license would be worse than living at the level of animals!

That is why external Artha and internal Kama both need the restraint of Dharma in our life. Dharma abides in the buddhi. The Upanishad states, 'Vignaana (acquired knowledge) is the *vistaaraka* (expanding factor) of Yagna. One *shakti* (power) of the *antaryaamee* (the one within) Parameshwara descends into the buddhi to restrain the accumulation of possessions and flagrant worldly indulgences. The Parameshwara sits astride the buddhi and indicates what is appropriate or inappropriate, worth accepting or to be rejected, what should be done and what should not be done, etc.'

Dharma has stability, prestige, dependability, spiritual power, and the independence of the right perception. Even when avid desires attack the mind the *pragna* (right perception) is not overcome by them; it remains established in the strength of Dharma. It is Dharma that takes a person's life on the path of righteousness, and protects him from losing his way. It is the root of *kalyaana* (spiritual good fortune) and the stairway to *nirvaana* (eternal bliss).

Dharma controls the overwhelming lust for wealth. It regulates avid desire for indulgence. Thus, it blunts the internal causes of wrong behavior.

Dharma has two tasks. One is to block unrestrained activity and the other is to nourish *nivritti* (withdrawal from worldly matters). Blocking keeps a control over Artha and Kama, and a robust *nivritti* helps to obtain the Moksha-Purushartha. Thus, Dharma cuts away worldly bondage and opens up the path to Mukti (Moksha).

Moksha is the fourth Purushartha. The Atma is its abode; it is Atma-roop (the form of the Atma), therefore, it cannot be obtained unless *nivritti* is very strong. Whichever *anga* (part; portion) of Dharma it may be, it is the *nivartaka* (that, which detaches) of some or other worldly factor that results in dukha. That, which does not remove some *dosha* (fault), is not Dharma.

Raaga-dve'sha (attachment – aversion) are caused by *mithyaa-gnaana* (believing the transient to be an eternal truth). *Raaga* and *dvesha* are *moha* (deluded thinking). These doshas are the root cause of the expansion of worldly activities.

The Yoga Darshan explains *kle'sha* (suffering; affliction) as *asmitaa* (pride; ego), *raaga-dve'sha*, *abhinive'sha* (identification with the body), etc. They are caused by *avidyaa* (nescience; faulty understanding). These faults grow and thrive in the field of *avidya*. *Avidya* itself is a great affliction. Vedanta gives the name of *Moksha* to the self-established *Atma* that is revealed by the removal of *avidya*. Therefore, a person who desires the *Moksha Purushartha* should take the refuge of the *Dharma* that leads to *nivritti*.

Yoga is the Highest Dharma.

A Glimpse of the Parts of Yoga.

Yoga is the *nivritti-pradhaana* (predominantly inclined towards withdrawing from worldly activities) *Dharma*. *Yagyavalkya* has said that the method of *Atma-Darshan* (understanding the *Atma*) is called the *parama* (the highest) *Dharma*.

Yoga is attained by human effort. It is carried out by a *jeeva* (*Atma* attached to a body; an individual). This has a *vidhi* (stipulated method) that is *tvam-padaartha-pradhaana* (dominated by the *padaartha* = substance that is *tvam* = 'you', the *Atma*). The *drashtaa* (the one who sees) being established in his *svaroopaa* (essence or true form) is Yoga.

This is why Yoga is included in the goal that stresses on the method of withdrawing from worldly considerations.

Yoga has eight *anga*. We will take a quick look at the *krama* (serial order) of the *angas*. The first is *yama*. *Yama* has five divisions – *satya* (truthfulness), *ahimsaa* (non-violence in thought, word and deed), *aste'ya* (not taking anything that is not rightfully yours), *aparigraha* (not accumulating more than you need), and *brahmacharya* (celibacy). The enemies are four but the methods for their removal are five.

Brahmacharya removes *kaama* (lust). This comes last, because lust is chief among the inclinations that lead to dependence and bondage. The assistants of the four *gunas* (attributes; qualities) have to be used to conquer lust. The movement of Kama is very subtle. It repeatedly pretends to be dead and rises again. To desire any object, at any place, time or form – apart from the Atma – is Kama. Kama abides even in the form of not wanting! That is why Kama is called *duraasada* (unassailable). It is difficult to catch.

The root of Kama is the *bhranti* (false understanding) of having lost that, which is always ours, and wanting to obtain other things. Gnan about the *advaya-tattva* (the non-dual essence of the Atma), the Brahman being the Atma, is essential for the removal of this *bhranti*. The *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) for obtaining that Brahman is called brahmacharya. From the mutual desire of men and women to the desire for any worldly object or objective, is Kama. This desire can be destroyed only by the *charyaa* (behavior prescribed by the Shastras) for the Brahman.

Vyaavritya (turning away) Through the Yamas.

Ste`ya (stealing) and *lobha* (greed) are wrong tendencies. Lobha comes in two forms. Steya is to get anything that is not rightfully yours. The other form is *parigraha*, meaning accumulating more than you need. Both are robust offspring of lobha.

Aste`ya (not stealing) and *aparigraha* (not accumulating) are the two *vritti* (mental inclinations) needed to conquer lobha. The first is to give up unjust acquisitions and the other is to give up what we don't need.

Krodha (anger) arises when a person's Kama and lobha are not fulfilled. A person also feels *dvesha* for anyone who is an obstacle in his obtaining what he wants. Dvesha and *krodha* flare up as a *vritti* that burns the heart. They result in the forms of *himsaa* (violence) and *vidroha* (revolt). *Krodha* is the fire and *himsa* is the flames that burn.

Ahimsa is needed to check himsa. Ahimsa is a *guna* (virtue; good tendency) of the antahkarana. It is in keeping with the swarup of the Atma. It is extremely favorable for the *svaroopasthiti* (being established in the essence or true form of the Self). It is more *antaranga* (internal; at a deeper inner level) than even

karunaa (compassion) and *kshamaa* (forgiveness), because both these exist in the form of *shaanti* (inner peace) even when there is no interaction.

The Need for the Yamas.

Our speech, actions, habits, resolves, thinking, and discrimination (of right and wrong) have been pierced with *asatya* (that, which is contrary to eternal righteousness). Our buddhi generally accepts *asatya* as the *satya* (that, which true to our intrinsic nature) and behave accordingly.

In *vyavahaara* (interaction; behavior) the *satya* for the mother is different from that for the wife. The demarcating line of this *satya* cannot be broken without going into a Samadhi, and this is essential for obtaining the *svaroop-satya* (the essence or true form of the Self).

That being the case, a person begins by making a resolve to speak only that truth. This will result in a *jignaasaa* (wish to know) about the *Satya*, because a person who wants to speak only the truth must know what is true and what is not.

Is the intellectual, emotional, or *aindriyaka* (of the indriyas = the senses) *satya* the only *satya*? Has the Atma-Satya become hidden, vanished, or unconscious?

What is the Atma-Satya?

The seed of the *jignasa* for the Atma is contained in *satya-bhaashana* (truthful speech). Do not say, do, or think anything that you know to be *asatya* (untrue; wrong). A day will come in your life when you will comprehend the exact meaning of *mauna* (maintaining silence as a discipline). You will not speak unless you have a personal experience of the *satya*. *Satya* manifests in *mauna*.

It is not necessary to state that the first anga of Yama is certainly beneficial to us and also useful for society. This is the quintessence of the common Dharma. Vedanta propounds the *saadhana-chatushtaya* (four methods) of which one is the *shat-sampatti* (six accomplishments). They include *shama* and *dama*, meaning, restraint of the mind and senses. Yama is a Dharma in the beginning and the achievement of eligibility at the end.

Yama merges into the life of a *jignaasu* (seeker of knowledge). It does not slacken even after the person obtains Tattvagnan. It becomes the basis for the

sukha of *jeevana-mukti* (being liberated from worldly considerations in this very life), and fills the life of a *jeevana-mukta* (liberated person) with joyfulness. It is the primary method among the methods used for turning inwards. Other methods do not have a stable foundation unless this is done first.

The Second Anga: Niyam.

Niyama (self-imposed disciplines) is the second part in Yoga. It is an essential sadhan for the development of individual life. When one substance merges into another neither retains its original form. Clay mixed with water turns into mire. Sugar mixed with water becomes sherbet; neither pure sugar nor pure water. In the same way, the *charitra* (character; nature) of a person loses its shuddha form due to the influence of the objects and people he encounters. The mixing of the Atma and the *anaatmaa* (that, which is not the Atma) is also an *ashuddhi* (impurity).

When the nature of a human being has an urge for *pavitrataa* (purity) he tries to remain pure externally and pure within. When the body becomes dirty it needs to be washed. Similarly, the mind becomes sullied with krodha and kama. To remove these impurities it is necessary to douse the fire of dvesha, and remove the stains of raaga. There is no coloring – external or internal – that does not need to be washed away. The method of cleansing is called *shaucha*.

Daily bathing and the ritual of Sandhya Vandan are methods for external and internal cleansing. The body has developed a habit of indulgence that has penetrated deep into the mind. This is a disease. The stronger it becomes, the stronger the bondage of attachment for the indulgence. New methods for enhancing sensual pleasures are invented. A person addicted to pleasure will indulge even if it means causing suffering to others.

This is why a person should take a *niyama* (vow) to keep indulgences within permitted levels. He should not allow his equanimity to be upset if things go against his inclinations. A person who lacks self-control is like an animal that wanders into everybody's fields, destroying crops.

A person who does not accept some discomfort for the sake of following the strictures of Dharma is not a *dharmaatmaa* (a person devoted to Dharma); he is a hypocrite. The *tapa* (asceticism; austerities) in the niyams of Yoga appear as the shat-sampatti in Vedanta, in the form of *titiksha* (endurance; forbearance). *Dhriti* (steadfastness) is the mother of *tapa*, and *titiksha* is the daughter. A person who has no *tapa* in his life cannot protect any *mantra* (group of words with subtle power), or maintain Gnan.

Shaucha is to remove the impurities of the body and mind that have come from outside. *Tapa* is a fire that turns the body and mind to gold. After that, a person needs *svaadhyaya* (study of the scriptures) to progress towards the goal, obtain Gnan about the goal, and get engrossed in the goal. In Dharma, *svadhyaya* means studying the Sanga-Veda. A person should, at the very least, study the branch of the Veda of his lineage.

In upasana, *svadhyaya* means to do *japa* (ritual chanting) for obtaining the *darshana* (see a revered object) of the Ishta Devta (the chosen form of worship). *Japa* helps us to forget the interactive world. It reminds us repeatedly of our goal. *Svadhyaya* does the same. This strengthens *abhyasa* (practice; habit) and *vairagya* (detachment from worldly considerations). *Abhyas* is predominant in *japa* – to go on repeating, and discard everything but the goal. *Svadhyaya* also increases the inclination for the goal.

It is essential for a spiritual aspirant to keep the *saadhana-shareera* (the body used for spiritual effort) healthy. Not being restless for any external object is an important part of this. The *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant)'s intake, clothes, house etc should be for the purpose of maintaining good health. He should not get attached to them, or begin to savor the comfort and pleasure they give.

If a person believes that external objects give him importance and glory, the greatness within will never awaken, because he will turn his back to the internal qualities. Are you superior because you are the *asanga aatmaa* (the unattached Atma) or are you superior because you obtain worldly honor, status, praise, luxuries, etc? Where is your inner satisfaction?

Sadhana becomes lifeless without *santosha* (satisfaction; contentment). However, the *santosh* should be for being free of worldly desires; not with the effort you make for spiritual progress!

Unless and until this *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) becomes one with Shiva, he is unable to be free of limited knowledge and limited shakti. A jeeva is just a jeeva. The limitation of a jeeva is inherent in every level of *saadhana* (method for spiritual progress). Weakness is linked to *jeevatva* (being a jeeva). A jeeva is sad at times and disheartened at times. At times he has short spurts of joyfulness and splendor. Just as the body experiences good and bad health, the mana also feels elated and dejected at times. Just as a doctor and proper treatment are needed to remove ill-health, the same are needed to keep the *mana* (emotional mind) healthy.

The treatment for mental problems is Ishwara *praanidhaana* (bowing down, surrendering to the Ishwara). The Ishwara is *shaashvata* (eternal), *sarvagna* (all-knowing), *sarva-shakti* (all-powerful), *karunaa-varunaalaya* (an ocean of compassion). He is the *parama* (supreme) Guru.

Just as air remains with the breath, and the light of vision remains with the eyes, the *sattvaansha* (part that is the pure existence – the Sat) remains with the mana. This sattvansha in the body is a form of the Parameshwara. If the mana is a particle, the Ishwara is clay. If the mana is a drop, the Ishwara is the ocean. If the mana is a *ghata* (pot), the Ishwara is the *ghataakaasha* (space inside the pot).

Therefore, ‘to see the mana with the *vidyaa* (skill; knowledge) of surrendering the Self to the Ishwara is pranidhana.’ The Ishwara is *prakrishta-nidhaana* (the greatest treasury); the storehouse of the *sattvaatmaka mana* (the mind composed of pure thoughts). The Parameshwara is the *kaarana* (cause) of *stithi-mati-gati-rati* (state-thinking-progress-love). To dedicate our mana to Him means to dedicate all our actions. This is called *aatma-samarpana* (to offer up our Self). This is Ishwara-pranidhana. It is also called *sharanaagati* (taking refuge in the Ishwara).

What is happening? What are you getting? What is being done to you? What is being said? Instead of thinking about these things, you should see only the boon-granting hand of the Param Guru Parameshwara who is full of compassion and benevolence. Everything that happens is before His eyes – where is the possibility of misfortune?

When a person surrenders totally to the Parameshwara, freeing himself from worldly worries, with the hope and faith of obtaining *paramaārtha* (the highest goal), he gets engrossed in sadhana with a firm determination. In the path of Bhakti, samarpan is considered to be the *poornataa* (wholeness) of sadhan, but in the path of Yoga it is accepted as a part of the methods that are helpful in sadhana.

Yama and niyam are the *bhoomikaa* (preamble) to the path of sadhans. They are essential and unavoidable for anyone who wants to walk on the path of sadhana. They protect the sadhak from various temptations and obstacles that lie ahead. They are external and internal strengths that enable the sadhak to progress without harming anyone or being harmed.

The Principle of Yoga and Sadhana.

In the principle of Yoga, *srishti* (Creation of the world) is of two kinds. One is the *parinaama* (result; effect) of *prakriti* (Nature) and the other is a result of *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the transient to be the Satya).

Avidya creates the perceptions of ‘I – mine’, and fear. In the language of Yoga these are called *asmitaa* (ego of individuality), *raaga-dve’sha* (attachment-aversion), *abhinive’sha* (identification with the body; fear of death). These are *klesha* (suffering). The loss of wealth, house, etc is not klesha; the *mamataa* (possessive attachment) and *ahamtaa* (possessive attachment) cause the suffering. Avidya is the cause of mamata and ahamta.

When a person obtains the *vive’ka* (discrimination) of the *prakriti-purusha* (Nature; the Ishwara’s power of creation – the Ishwara who is the Atma or the Brahman with attributes), and the entire world is submerged into Prakriti like a corpse that is buried, the *gnaana-svaroopa drashtaa* (the drashta who sees, whose essence is Gnan) is not buried in Samadhi. This is the Sampragnat Samadhi. In the Asampragnat Samadhi, the Atma remains separate from the Samadhi and becomes established in its swarup through *vive’ka-khyaati* (discriminating consciousness). This is the highest level on the path of Yoga. This is why the practice of Samadhi begins at the very start of the practice of Yoga.

According to the principle of Yoga there are only two Tattvas (fundamental elements) – the Purusha and Prakriti. The *asanga drashtaa* (unattached Atma who sees) is *aparinaamee* (eternal). Prakriti is *kshana-parinaamee* (transient). Prakriti is the *prathama kaarana* (primary cause). She assumes many forms. The five elements (earth, water, fire, air and space) are the *antima kaarana* (final cause; the objects in the world).

The elements in-between are common to both. The Purusha is separate from this world of cause and effect. He is indifferent and unattached. His separate form can be experienced by a person in Samadhi. In the terms of Yoga, this is not called a *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience); it is called *avasthaana* (being established) in the *svaroopa* (essence or true form of the Atma). Samadhi follows in one or another form, in every sadhan that comes before the ultimate state of Samadhi.

Prakriti has three *guna* (tendencies). The gunas are Sattva, Raja and Tama. In the *krama* (serial order) of effect, they remain equally balanced at the time of *pralaya* (Dissolution), and uneven at the time of *srishti* (Creation). Sadhan takes a person from Tamo guna (the lowly tendency that gives sloth and deluded thinking) to Rajo guna (the mixed tendency that gives strong urges and hectic activity), and from Rajo guna to Sattva guna (the lofty tendency that gives peace and right thinking). This is why *aasana* (yogic postures), *praanaayaama* (breath control exercises), and *pratyahaara* (withdrawing the senses) are all useful and essential in their own way in attaining Samadhi.

It should not be forgotten that the five elements are the concluding effect of Prakriti. The different forms of animals, birds and humans etc are not the *kaarya* (effect); they are *kaaryaabhaasa* (an illusion of being the effect). They are artificial; imagined in the *panchabhoota* (five elements). There can be no *karya* of the *karya*! Therefore, the *aadi* (origin) and *anta* (conclusion) of all *shareera* (bodies; gross physical forms) are the *panchabhoota*.

It is in the *panchabhoota* that all forms are seen, and in which they merge. The *avidya* of 'I – mine' is a creation of *aviveka* (lack of discrimination between the eternal and the transient); it is not the creation of Prakriti. This is why the Yoga sadhana is used to give a *dravya-samaadhi* (immerse gross matters in the elements they are created from). The unmoving state of the *shareera* (body)

makes it one with the five elements. The *vyashti-moodhataa* (inert quality of the body of the individual) becomes one with the *samashti-moodhataa* (insensate quality of all creation). This is the dravya Samadhi of the body.

If the body remains still for a long period of time without feeling pain or discomfort, and consciousness is retained, the Tamo guna of the *vyashti-kaaryaabhaasa* (the illusion of individuality) becomes established in the *samashti-kaarya* (the effect that is the whole of Creation). This is the *siddhi* (accomplishment) of the asana. This gives control over hunger and thirst. The *jeevana* (life) of the panchabhoota becomes sufficient for the *shareera-jeevana* (the life of the body).

Asana and Pranayama.

Rajo guna is *vikshe`pa-roopa* (the form of disturbance; agitation). It is with the predominance of Rajo guna that *kriyaa* (actions) and *vikriyaa* (distortions; wrong actions) are done. The feeling of 'I – mine' is caused by avidya, and because of this, the kriya-shakti of the *praana* (breath of life; vitality) is also influenced by avidya. It is because of this that the activities of breathing in and out, the flow of blood, digestion, evacuation, growth of hair and nails, and other changes in the body take place. Both kriya and vikriya are due to this.

The sadhana of pranayam curtails these kriyas and vikriyas. Only the kriya of breathing remains. Interactive action becomes the action of the individual. The siddhi of pranayam is the accomplishment of individual activity merging into the activity of the universe. The result is good health and greater longevity.

There can be many kinds of asanas and pranayams in the beginning, but there is only one asana and only one pranayam useful for Samadhi. Asanas done while moving or lying down are not useful for Yoga. The former has vikshep, and the second has *laya* (merging into stupor). Therefore, just as the asana of being seated is helpful for Samadhi the pranayam of *kumbhaka* (holding the breath) is helpful for Samadhi.

Pratyahara in the Path of Yoga.

The close contact of the *indriya* (sense organs) and the *vishaya* (objects of the senses) is always *dhyanaatmaka* (mental; connected to thoughts). The *dravya-shakti* (strength of the matter of which the body is made) is immersed

in an unanimated state through an asana. The *kriyaa-shakti* (power of action) is immersed in a state of being unanimated through pranayam, and the knowledge of the *indriya-shakti* (power of the senses) is immersed in Samadhi through *pratyahaara* (withdrawing the senses).

The shakti of the indriyas and vishays is limited. They keep encountering each other in their respective spheres. It depends on their strength about how far, for how long, and in how many ways they meet and part among themselves.

The fact is the *chitta-sattva* (consciousness – pure existence) of all creation is one. The shakti of the indriyas that absorb their respective vishays is the *vritti* (inclinations) of the *chitta-sattva*. Just as water ripples when it is moved, but is still when unmoving, the Gnan-shakti if the indriyas is dormant in the respective spheres of the senses. The inclinations of the senses not absorbing the sense objects and their becoming unmoving in their own spheres, is *pratyahara*.

The Samadhi for the inclination for knowledge of the senses is the primary form of *pratyahara*. This helps the sadhak to become free of the attraction, temptation, and obstacles regarding them. Therefore, in the parts of Yoga, asana, pranayam, and *pratyahara* – that leads to *dravya Samadhi* – *kriya Samadhi*, and *aindriyaka-vritti-samaadhi* (suspension of the inclinations of the senses) – are absolutely useful for *chitta-vritti-nirodha* (blocking mental inclinations). It is through these that control over the sense organs and the organs of action, is achieved.

Nirodha (blocking) does not mean to kill or destroy. *Nirodh* is *svaatteekarana* (becoming autonomous; sovereignty). There is certainly this difference in the three, that asana and pranayam can be practiced without *vairagya*, but *pratyahara* requires *vairagya* to be stable.

Dharma is: *yama-niyam*, *abhyas* in asana-pranayam, and *vairagya* for stability in *pratyahara*. These are basic. To mentally touch the *lakshya* (goal) repeatedly is *abhyas*. To disdain everything that is contrary to the *lakshya* is *vairagya*. There should be no *spardhaa* (competitive feeling), *dvesha*, *krodha* (anger), or *eershyaa* (envy) even for the opponent of the *lakshya*.

Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi and their Vignana.

After these five sadhans, three sadhans are started, which are more *antaranga* (at a deeper level). They are called *dhaaranaa*, *dhyana* and Samadhi. Very few people notice where the acceptance of gross matter given in the Nyaya-Vaisheshik and Poorva Mimansa philosophies disappears in *de'sha-kaala yogaabhyasa* (place and time in the practice of Yoga). Place and time are not accepted as substances in the principle of Yoga. The contraction and expansion of the vrittis is called *de'sha* (place; space), and the *krama* (serial order) of the vrittis rising and dying is called *kaala* (time). These are neither Prakriti (Nature) not *vikriti* (distortions), nor *ubhayaatmaka* (amphibious). *Vritti nirodha* (blocking thoughts) achieves this nirodh.

The forms imagined in the *panchabhoota* (five elements) – earth, water, fire, air and space; meaning, the illusion of the effect – is believed to be a *vastu* (object that is eternal). This is *avive'ka* (lack of discrimination).

It is also avivek to believe the desha of the *vyashti-samashti* (the unit – the total) and the kaala of the *vyashti-samashti* to be separate from the vritti.

Dhaaranaa (to hold something in the mind) is used mainly to shrink the vrittis of desha and kaala. Since these three – dharana, dhyana and Samadhi; meaning, becoming unaware of the external – are directly connected to the shrinking of the vrittis, they are more antarang than the sadhans mentioned earlier.

East-West, North-South, above-below, internal-external vrittis appear to spread in all directions and forms. Bind the vritti in any one form of desha – the *moolaadhaara* (center of subtle energy at the base of the spine), *sahasraara* (the center of subtle energy at the top of the head), Vaikuntha (the realm of Vishnu Bhagwan), or the *aadhyaatmika* (spiritual) *hridaya-desha* (space of the heart). You can bind the vrittis in any of these. Even the two-armed and the four-armed and other images have length and breadth. The *shaligram shilaa* (a round stone worshipped as Vishnu Bhagwan) has roundness. The vrittis should be kept steady in any one of these. No other place should rise up in the mind.

You can also start it this way: 'I will not allow my thoughts to go out of this room, house, or body.' You can make your vritti identify with any of the *chakra* (centers of subtle energy) in the body. The concept of desha will gradually shrink and disappear, and the vritti will not move from its allotted place.

Actually, it is not the vrittis that move; it is the place that changes forms. The vritti is neither in one country nor does it go abroad. It is transformed to the forms that are imagined.

When the vritti is in the *anu-roopa* (miniscule form) the expanse of place vanishes; only the vritti remains. The vritti that is free of space and imagined objects is liberated. It attains oneness with the *chitta-sattva* (the pure existence that has consciousness), meaning, it becomes eligible for Samadhi. Samadhi and *samaadhaana* (solution of a problem; contemplation) mean the same thing. *Samyak aadhaana* (dully depositing) is samadhan. That means, the vritti becoming *abhinna* (not separate) from its chitta swarup cause – that is the substance of which it is made – and remaining there.

Vrittis rise up and subside in a *krama* (sequence) or *akrama* (without sequence), but the krama of rising and subsiding remains. The past, future and present are all in the vritti. They are neither in Prakriti nor in the pancha bhoota. They can have no connection with the drashta even in imagination. Actually, kaala is a form of vritti. When the vrittis are in repose there is no *kaala samvit* (awareness of time). Kaala exists as long as there is Samvit, and as long as kaala exists there is *tadaakaara samvit* (awareness of identification). Vritti and kaala cannot be separated. When the vritti begins to flow repeatedly towards only one lakshya, and spreads its thoughts about the goal, it gradually becomes denser. Kaala then becomes *anu* (miniscule; microscopic) and vritti also becomes anu with it.

Kaala loses its existence when it reaches this miniscule state, and vritti leaves the effect that is a form of kaala and takes on the form of the goal. After that, there is no awareness of kaala. The vritti may be with krama or akrama, or in an unnatural order, or of any kind; it has the awareness of the *anu-kaala* (microscopic time). This imagined kaala disappears at the peak of dhyana. In this, Samadhi – or samadhan – only the lakshya quivers. That is not kaala. This is why dhyana is a direct method of Samadhi that comes just before Samadhi, and is not a separate part.

The Vignan of Samadhi.

This is why it is necessary in Yoga-sadhana to establish that the Atma – or Brahman – are not separated by place, time, or matter. When a person

achieves *vritti-nirodha* (blocking thoughts) in Samadhi, he no longer has any perception of place, time or object. The *chitta-vritti* (mental inclination) becomes one with the one eternal chitta-sattva, and the drashta of the chitta-vrittis becomes the drashta of the entire chitta-sattva, the *vibhu* (all-pervading) drashta.

To think that some other is the drashta, or the Ishwara, Prakriti or something created by Prakriti, is the *vilasa* (sensual pleasure) of the vrittis. When the vritti merges into the chitta-sattva the drashta does not remain the drashta of anyone or anything; he remains *drigmaatra* (mere vision). This is called Kaivalya – a state of oneness with the Brahman.

Samadhi is when the vritti merges into the chitta-sattva. There are two divisions in this. One is before vivek-khyati and the other is after vivek-khyati. The first is called an *asampragnaata samaadhi* and the second is called a *sampragnaata samaadhi*. The dividing line of the two is vivek-khyati. The arising and dissolution of the world created by Prakriti is not the cause of Kaivalya. Kaivalya is attained by Samadhi achieved by practice. Therefore, effort is essential to obtain the benefits of the state of Samadhi.

Vritti is the *saamyonmukha* (facing both sides equally), or *vaishamyonmukha* (unequal) *spandana* (pulsation) of the chitta-sattva. In *saamya* (equally balanced) the form is balanced equally and in *vishama* (unequally balanced) it is unequal. '*vartanam vritti*' – to be *vyaaprita* (engaged) is vritti.

This is believed to be of five kinds in the Yoga Darshan method: *pramaana* (the proof), *viparyaya* (inverted), *vikalpa* (doubt; option), *nidraa* (stupor; slumber), and *smriti* (memory). These can be connected to avidya and the five *kle'sha* (suffering), and can also be free of them. Whatever their form, vrittis should definitely be blocked. All vrittis – *laukika* (worldly), *paaralaukika* (of other worlds), and *paaramaarthika* (pertaining to the Atma) – are in the category of *nirodha* (blocking). The Yogis do not exempt even religious rituals, bhakti for Bhagwan, and shravan-nididhyasan. Since *pramaana* (the proof), *prame'ya* (that which is proved) and the form of *pramaa* (the intellect that gives the right perception) are forms of interaction, and are nothing but vrittis to be blocked, where is the importance of other vrittis?

This is a different Darshan (school of thought). The Bhakti-darshan and Vedanta-darshan do not accept this kind of Samadhi-Yoga; both Bhakti and Brahmavidya are forms of vritti. If vritti itself is blocked, no method remains for obtaining *bhagavadaakaara* (the form of Bhagwan) and removing avidya. The Shastras call this the *prasthaana-bhe`da* (difference in the systems).

To block the vrittis with the support of a gross object, to block the vrittis with the support of a subtle object, and to block the vrittis with the support of anand are the forms of the Sampragnat Samadhi.

In this there are three further divisions – concluding in the *graahya* (that which is absorbed), *grahana* (the absorbing) and the *greeheeta* (the one who absorbs).

The difference between the knowledge of the word and its meaning disappears while the person is in Samadhi. In the principle of Yoga, Gnan is also the *parinaama* (result) of Prakriti. So, the word ‘ghata’ (pot), the meaning of ghata, and knowledge about the ghata become one. The difference between *praakrita* (of Prakriti) Gnan, the *gnaataa* (knower), and the *gne`ya* (that, which is known) disappears.

However, the *apraakrita* (not created by Prakriti; eternal) *chit-shakti* (power of consciousness) that is Gnan-swarup remains unchanged. This is where the Gnan created by nature, and *shuddha* (pure) Gnan are separated, and this is called *vive`ka-khyaati*.

Sanskaara (subtle subconscious impressions) continue to flow quietly during Samadhi. When the drashta is aware of the triad (that which is seen, the one who sees, and the seeing), it is a *sabeeja* (with seed) Samadhi. When nirodh is done of even this triad, everything is blocked and a *nirbeeja* (without seed) Samadhi is attained.

The Distinguishing Quality of the Principle.

It is the distinguishing quality of the principle of Yoga that here, the Purusha (Atma) is not the karta; it is Prakriti who does everything. Prakriti naturally reaches the result, and does so with intelligence. To be and to do are the two forms of Prakriti.

Sleep happens involuntarily, but Samadhi has to be done by using the buddhi. When the buddhi withdraws the vrittis from the external, and gives them a hard push towards the internal, the buddhi merges into its goal without any pride of being the karta. That means the buddhi merges into the chitta-sattva that is the Purusha.

In the sadhana of Samadhi it is the feeling of being the one who is making the effort that is the causal factor. However, once a person gets vivek-khyati the feeling of being the doer becomes inactive. This way, Prakriti gives *bhoga* (pleasure) to the Purusha through the *bahirmukha parinaama* (external objects), and gives *apavarga* (release from suffering) through the *antarmukha parinaama* (the result of being turned towards the internal).

The Purusha is *asanga* (unattached) and *udaaseena* (uninterested). He is established in Kaivalya. In Kaivalya there is no bhoga and no apavarga. A person who has attained Yoga-drishhti (the viewpoint of Yoga) does not get affected by the prapanch. The prapanch, however, is a *praakrita* (of Prakriti; natural) Satya. It continues to affect other people. A person who blocks his vrittis and sits stolidly in his swarup is *mukta* (liberated), and a person who does not do this is *baddha* (bound to the external world). He merges with the vrittis of his mind and keeps becoming what his vrittis are.

When the *shareera* (body) has *abhinive'sha* (the Atma's identification with the body), fear arises. The person has raaga-dvesha for the *pancha-tanmaatra* (subtle forms of the five elements). *Asmitaa* (pride) is connected to *ahamtaa* (ego; pride of individuality). Avidya is the cause of buddhi becoming misled in the *mahat-tattva* (the essential nature of the universe).

Samadhi is at the borderline that merges into Prakriti, but the Purusha is separate from everything. All the klesha in the world is due to identifying with the vrittis. This is why *parivartana* (change), *taapa* (suffering), *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions), and identification with the tendencies of the gunas (Sattva guna, Raja guna and Tama guna) that a person suffers. Therefore, there is no other method except the practice of Yoga, to become free of the factors that cause suffering.

Yoga Vibhutis.

There is a strong connection between *yogaanushtthaana* (the rituals of Yoga) and *vibhooti* (supernatural powers). When the vrittis let go of the identification with the body and begin to become one with the *paripoorna* (complete within itself) chitta-sattva, the person begins to get *poorna* (complete) Gnan, poorna shakti, etc through his vrittis. Through this, it is possible to achieve *siddhi* (supernatural powers) like *anima* (becoming very small), *mahimaa* (becoming very large), *laghimaa* (becoming very light), etc. To be able to see and hear things from far off, read the thoughts of another, and *parakaayaa-prave'sha* (entering another person's body) are all lowly siddhis.

When the vrittis emerge after being immersed in the chitta-sattva they bring something or other with them. These vibhuti are the reflection of Samadhi, vivek-khyati, and the natural state of the Purusha. If a person practicing Yoga gets some siddhi he should never reveal his powers. A person who gets attracted by siddhis, or displays his powers – considering them to be important – he can never attain the goal.

Yoga and Dharma.

Yoga and Dharma can both be achieved by human effort. Therefore, in spite of the *apaurushe'ya shruti* (the verses of the Vedas that are not created by any mortal being) giving the teaching about them, they are Dharma only for a jeeva who is *tvam-padaartha* (the 'you' substance, meaning, a person who identifies with his body).

This is why the Shastras give them the names of *antaranga* – *bahiranga* (internal – external). Dharma is done by the buddhi that is inclined towards rituals, whereas Yoga is done by the buddhi that is inclined towards shanti. Neither of them can reach up to getting the benefits of the ultimate success (enlightenment). Neither is suitable for their options to be open to all. Therefore, the arrangement of what is right for whom should be according to the eligibility of the individual.

The *vidhaana* (ruling) is that Dharma is for those who are inclined towards karma, and the practice of Yoga is for those who are inclined to seek inner peace or Samadhi.

Dharma is the principle sadhan for *karana-shuddhi* (purifying the instruments) and Yoga is the principle sadhan for the shuddhi of the karta. Therefore, both are helpful in the purification of the tvam-padartha, and are prescribed by the Vedas.

Bhagwat Dharma.

Tad-padartha and Bhakti.

Now we will give some thought to the *tat-padaartha* (the 'That' substance. The ultimate statement of the Vedas is 'Tattvamasi'. Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam = you, the Atma, asi = is. You are the Atma that is the non-dual Brahman, the substratum of all that exists.)

Tat-pada (the word 'Tat') is a pronoun as well as a noun. 'Om tat sat' (Om, the Brahman is that Sat, meaning the ultimate truth that can never be negated) is well known. The meaning is the one who expands the prapanch – *tanoti* (to expand). To meditate on His swarup, to remember Him, to sing His glories, etc are all *tat-padaartha pradhaana dharma* (Dharma that is predominantly focused on the Ishwara). The purpose is to make the mind engrossed in Him, and to remove the imagined screen that hides Him. That is the tat-padartha Dharma.

In common parlance, this is called Bhakti.

Bhakti is to separate the world from the Ishwara, and do the *anusandhaana* (investigation) of the Ishwara. *Bhaaga-vibhaaga* (portion – division) is Bhakti.

Bhajana (thinking lovingly of Bhagwan) is Bhakti.

Sansaara-bhanjana (shattering the interactive world mentally) is Bhakti.

The importance of the *vive`ka* (discrimination; separating) of the Atma and the *anaatmaa* (that, which is not the Atma) in the meditation of the tvam-padartha is the same as the importance of Bhakti in the meditation of the Tat-padartha. Meaning, the vivek of the *aparoksha* (something that is experienced directly, but not through the senses), and the Bhakti of the *paroksha* (something unseen; beyond the scope of the senses).

The Vivek of the Aparoksha, and Bhakti for the Paroksha.

The Charvaks believe that only the *pratyaksha* (perceived directly through the senses) and *anumaana* (an estimate based on past experience) is the Satya (a truth that can never be negated). Neither they, nor the Buddhists, accept the *sattaa* (existence) of the Atma and Paramatma. The Jains believe in an Atma that shrinks and expands; they do not accept the existence of the Paramatma. The Jain and Buddhist philosophies certainly have Bhakti, but it is for the Teerthankars (people who have attained a state of having risen above worldly considerations) or the Buddha (enlightened one), not for the Paramatma.

The Nyaya-Vaisheshik philosophy accepts a Paramatma who is established by logic.

In the Yoga Darshan, the Paramatma is a helpful factor in the successful accomplishment of methods leading to Samadhi.

In the philosophy of Sankhya, the Paramatma – seen from the Tattva-drishti (the viewpoint of the Tattva) – has to be placed in the category of *drishya-drashtaa* (that, which is seen – the one who sees), or imagined as the *mahaa-drashtaa* (the great seer), who is separate from the drashta-drishya.

The Poorva Mimansa philosophy does not accept the Atma as the karta, and the Paramatma as the one who gives the fruits of karmas. They believe that karmas give their own fruits.

In the Vedanta Darshan, the Paramatma attached to Maya (power of illusion) is the Creator of the world as well as the giver of the fruits of karmas. He is not established by logic, nor is He an emotionally imagined object. He is established by the Shrutis. This has its own place in the experience of the Paramartha (highest knowledge). The *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual)-Ishwara, free of avidya and Maya, is not separate from the *svaroopa* (essence or true form of the Self).

Thoughts on the Cause of the Prapanch.

There are several opinions about the *kaarana* (cause) of this interactive world. The Charvaks believe that the world is created by the *bhoota-chatushtaya* (four elements: earth, water, fire and air). They do not accept *utpatti-pralaya*

(Creation – Dissolution), so there is no need for a *nimitta* (instrumental factor) like karma or the Ishwara.

The Jains do not believe that the world was created, or that it is destroyed, but they believe in the *pudgala* (soul) to be the *upaadaana* (substance of which the world is made), and karma to be the *nimitta* of birth and death of matter. The four elements and the pudgal are *bahiranga* (external); karmas are *antaranga* (internal).

In the Nyaya-Vaisheshik philosophy the *paramaanu* (particles) are the upadan, the Ishwara is the *nimitta*, and karmas etc are supplementary factors.

The Buddhists are *antaraga kaaranavaadee* – they believe the cause of the world is the mind. Their *vignaana* (acquired knowledge) – the *chitta* (mental inclinations), *shoonya* (the vacuum that is the ultimate Satya), karmas etc – are all internal. The Paramatma has no place in their principle of *kaarya-kaarana* (effect – cause)

In the Sankhya Darshan, Prakriti is the upadan as well as the *nimitta kaarana* (cause). Prakriti herself becomes, and she herself creates. Being established between the buddhi and the Purusha, Prakriti is *antarang*.

In the Poorva Mimansa philosophy *srishti* (Creation) is believed to be *anaadi-ananta* (without a beginning- without an end; eternal). In this, there is a variety of karmas that are the *nimitta* (instrumental). The Atma is the *kartaa-bhoktaa* (doer-the one who has pleasant and unpleasant experiences). *Srishti* is external, but the karmas and the karta are internal.

Vedanta ascertains the *tat-padartha swarup* Paramatma. There are two streams in this – the *sagunavaadee* (the opinion of those who worship the Ishwara with attributes) and the *nirgunavaadee* (the opinion of those who worship the Brahman without attributes).

In the group of the sagunavadi are the Shaivas (who worship Shiva), Shaktas (who worship Shakti), Ganapatyas (who worship Ganapati), and other Avatars. The surprising thing is that they all believe the Paramatma to be the *abhinna-nimitta-upaadana kaarana* (the cause that is both the matter and also the instrumental factor of Creation). Some believe the Paramatma to be *vishe`shya-vishe`shana* (distinctive – attributive), some *kaarya-kaarana* (effect-

cause), some *svaabhaavika* (natural), some *aupaadhika* (a superimposition), some *vivarta* (a modification) and some the *parinaama* (result). To believe, know, and experience is also necessary because of the pledge of the Shrutis : ‘*Eka vignaana se` sarva vignaana* – the acquired knowledge that gives knowledge about everything.’ Gold is separate in different ornaments, and iron in different objects, but are essentially one element, are given as examples.

The Upanishad states clearly, ‘Everything is *pragnaana-ghana* (filled with the right perception).’ There is no doubt in the Brahma Sutras either. It states that the command of the Shrutis is that the Paramatma is the only Satya (existence that can never be negated). Elsewhere, the *shrutyaamaana* (whatever you hear about Creation is Maya, and Maya is a name of the Ishwara) Prakriti is also a name of the Paramatma. Everything is but one Paramatma; the distortions are only in name. The Atma is everything. The Brahman is everything. ‘This’ (the world) is everything. ‘Tat’ (That, the Brahman) is everything. ‘Aham’ (I, the Atma) is everything.

Thus, many such mantras are given in the Vedas. Therefore, whatever seems to be separate from the Paramatma is either a false understanding or it is imagined, or it is the *aatma-vilaasa* (the frolic of the Atma) of the Paramatma.

The Sat (pure existence) has *kaarya* (effect; the different objects of the world), but the Sat is *aparinaami* (unchanging, unending, not having any result). Chit (consciousness) has *prateeti* (perception) but Chit is never *drishya* (perceived by the senses). Anand has *leelaa-vilaasa* (frolic-sensual pleasure) but it is *nirvikaara* (not subject to distortion).

Kaarya is in that, which is free of any *parinaama* (result; conclusion). Drishya is in the *adrishya* (that which cannot be perceived). There is anand without there being any *bhoktaa-bhogya* (the one who enjoys-that, which is enjoyed). This is the swarup of the Paramatma established by Vedanta.

The Paramatma is not just an object of *shraddhaa* (faith). When *aavarana-bhanga* (shattering of the curtain of nescience that hides the Atma) is achieved, the person gets the *saakshaata-aparoksha anubhava* (direct personal experience, but not through the senses) of the Paramatma’s swarup which is established by first the Shrutis and then experienced personally.

The Non-dual Quality of the One Worthy of Worship.

If this Paramatma were separate from the Atma, then – in spite of being *pratyaksha* (perceived directly through the senses) – it would become *drishya* (perceived), *kaarya* (the effect, a gross object), *jada* (inert) and *bhogy*a (an object that can be experienced). It will have to be accepted as *parichhinna* (a separate object). If it is *paroksha* (something that cannot be perceived by the senses) it will be something that is imagined. The *aparokshataa* (being aparoksh) of the Paramatma – that is separate from the pratyaksh-paroksh – is not possible without accepting *abhe`da* (oneness; not being separate).

The Paramatma separate from me, the Atma, is imagined, *sattaa-shoonya* (non-existent), *moorchhita* (unconscious), and *jada* (inert). The Atma separate from the Paramatma is *mrityugrasta* (caught in the trap of death), unconscious, and dukhi. Therefore, the Paramatma established by the Shrutis is non-dual.

One, connected to two or three; that is called *anvaya* (inclusion). There is also *vyatire`ka* (exclusion). In one there are the divisions of increase and decrease, coming together and separating, etc, but none of these are in the advitiya.

Thus, Vedanta ascertains the Atma-Paramatma as one, and the non-dual swarup that is free of attributes.

Certainly, there are several statements that ascertain the Tat and tvam padartha, and these are called *avaantara vaakya* (secondary statements). The tat-tvam ascertained by them is established as *saamaanaadhikarana* (having a common function). The word *asi* (is) indicates oneness, negating the *upaadhi* (attributes) of both *padaartha* (substances) to explain the non-dual form of the swarup.

The attributes are negated in the non-duality. Then, the purpose being achieved, the negating statement – the Maha Vakya (the ultimate statement of the Vedas, Tattvamasi, meaning, Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam = you, the Atma, asi = is. You are the Atma that is not separate from the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) is also negated. The non-dual Brahman is one with the Satya *pratyagatmaa* (the Atma within that can never be negated).

The Extraordinary Qualification of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Up to now we have discussed that Dharma and Param Dharma purify the antahkarana, and are helpful in the direct personal experience of the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma. It is certain that they have their own special qualifications. A person who desires the fruit of his efforts is eligible for Dharma – *anushthaana* (specific rituals recommended by instituted religion). He should also have the capacity and competence for doing the rituals, understand the undertaking, and he should not be disqualified by the Shastras.

If done without the *sampatti* (wealth) of *adhikaara* (eligibility; qualification), without the proper method, purposeless anushthana yields no fruit.

A person is eligible for Yoga when he uses the method of Samadhi to become established in the Atma-swarup. He is inclined towards *vive'ka* (discrimination between the Atma and the *anaatmaa* = that, which is not the Atma), and practices *vairagya* (detachment for worldly considerations).

A *mumukshu* (one who desires Moksha) must have *vivek*, *vairagya*, the *shat-sampatti* (six accomplishments) and *jignaasaa* (a wish for knowledge) for the *bodha* (incandescent understanding) of *brahmaatmaikya* (the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma).

It goes without saying that this kind of a desire and effort is not easy for people in general. Mental weakness makes a person succumb to avid desires, and fall in the ditch of a bad lifestyle, be burdened by feelings of inadequacy, have *aasakti* (strong attachment) for objects and people, fearing harm or loss of loved ones, having false vanity about great learning, great intelligence, wealth, and other transitory factors, believing agnan to be Gnan, etc are some of the obstacles that render a human being incapable of adhering to the *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) for Dharma, Yoga, and Gnan. This inability is not due to any enforced prohibition; it is because of the individual's ineligibility.

Strong support or encouragement is needed for a person to rise above this ineligibility. A firm *aashraya* (shelter; refuge) is necessary for a person who slips to regain his balance, for someone who falls to get up again, for someone who has fallen behind to come forward again. There must be someone who

will pick up a fallen person, embrace the impoverished and wretched, and be the support of those who have no support.

And, certainly, there is someone!

The one should be such that he does not bother to see whether we are competent or not, because we are filled with incompetence! His nature should be so compassionate that he gives us protection, nurturing, and helps us grow. It is for the fulfillment of this hope of the human heart that the Bhagwat-Dharma has manifested.

It is the special quality of the Bhagwat-Dharma that it does not test the eligibility or ineligibility of a person. It showers *kalyaana* (spiritual good fortune) every moment, without examining or inspecting a person.

On the one hand, the Bhagwat-Dharma abides in Narad and other Rishis, Yama Raj and other Devtas, Manu and other Kings, Vyasa and other learned sages, Shuka and other mendicants.

On the other hand, it also manifests in Vritrasura and other Asura (demoniac races), the unlettered gopis of Vrindavan, cows, animals, birds, trees, creepers, and depraved men like Ajamil.

Like a gardener tending the plants in his garden, doing everything needed to make them strong and healthy, Bhagwan Himself protects a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) whose weaknesses lead to his downfall.

The fulfillment of the quality of a *saguna* (with attributes) Bhagwan is not in calling ineligible people to Him; Bhagwan's divine qualities are fulfilled when He protects and helps even the wretched!

Bhagwan bestows happiness on people without examining their eligibility. That is why His Dharma is called the Bhagwat-Dharma. It is different from all other Dharmas.

It is accepted unanimously that the Bhagwat-Dharma is free of considerations of eligibility. Whether it is a human being or an animal, a Devta or an Asura, a Brahmin or a Shudra, woman or man, wealthy or poor, a child or an aged person, a person with all faults or a person with all virtues, a fool or a sage – all are eligible for this Dharma.

We see animals, birds, trees and creepers filled with love for Bhagwan in the Krishna *leela* (frolic) or Rama leela. This compels us to acknowledge that although the guest list of big people is selected with great care, the doors of a large-hearted person are open to all. The Bhagwat-Dharma is magnanimous in the same way. Bhagwan's doors are always open to all. His natural compassion for all beings has descended in the form of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The Extraordinary Swarup of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The *shrouta-smaarta* (of the Shrutis and the Smritis) Dharmas tell us to undertake special rituals like Yagna-Yaaga etc. There are specific rituals for those who are eligible for them. Any mistake in the correct implementation results in a *pratyavaaya* (adverse reaction). A mistake in the *sankalpa* (formal resolve), or the serial order of procedure, a missing ingredient, some impurity in any ingredient used, faulty pronunciation of the mantras, any distraction on the part of the *yajamaana* (sponsor; the person doing the ritual), an unconscious lapse on the part of the *purohita* (officiating priest) – any of these become obstacles in the success of the ritual.

Such specific *karma* (rituals) are called Dharma, and they must be carried out faultlessly. Some Yagnas and Yaags include animal sacrifice. For these, *shraddhaa* (faith), an auspicious time according to the position of planets, a place that is *pavitra* (pure according to the Shastras), items that have been obtained ethically, and *vritti-santosha* (mental satisfaction) are also necessary factors.

None of this is necessary for the Bhagwat-Dharma. No matter what the Karma is, it should be offered up (dedicated to) Bhagwan. There is no rule about which Karma it is; what is important is the *bhaava* (feeling) of *samarpana* (dedicating it; offering it up to Bhagwan).

The *bala* (strength) of the Shrouta-Smaarta Dharmas is *kartritva* (the feeling of being the doer of a deliberate action), the formal resolve, the right procedure, the right ingredients, and the totality of the ritual. All these must be perfect for the person to get the fruit of the Karma.

In the Bhagwat-Dharma, the only *bala* is Bhagwan's *bala*. There is no predominance of *ude'shya* (purpose).

In the words of the Acharyas (Masters; Teachers), 'Bhakti is strong with the strength of the *prame`ya* (that, which is established). Dharma is strong with the strength of the *vidhaana* (rules). Vedanta is strong with the strength of the *pramaana* (proof). Bhakti is strong with the strength of the established Bhagwan. This is the great difference between Dharma and Bhakti.'

Dharma is predominantly the body of actions done by the individual, whereas Bhakti is the *avatarana* (descending) of the Beloved.

This is why a bhakta should dedicate everything he does through his body, speech, mind, senses, intelligence, pride, nature molded by subtle subconscious impressions, etc. The Bhagwat-Dharma does not depend on the swarup of the karmas. Its only swarup is to offer up everything to the *antaryaamee* (the one who abides within) Parameshwara.

In the practice of Yoga it is necessary to go to deeper levels steadily, but this is not necessary in the Bhagwat-Dharma. *Anushthaana* (specific rituals) in the Bhagwat-Dharma are only a token. In fact, this is like Tattvagnan; it is a Dharma that is predominantly dependant on *aasthaa* (belief; faith), where rituals are not needed. In some cases, however, astha is not seen – as in the case of Ajamil.

The Special fruit.

There is a vast difference between the fruit of the Shrouta-Smarta Dharmas and the fruit of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Dharma-anushthana creates an *apoorva vastu* (a latent fruit) in the karta, or in his antahkarana. This manifests in the form of the fruit at the right time. The fruit is in proportion to the Dharma done. The apoorva dies after giving the fruit, and so does the fruit. A temporary karma cannot bestow an everlasting fruit, whether it is Swarga or Brahmaloaka (Heaven, or the realm of Brahmaji); it will not be forever. It is inevitable that the person has to face the dukha of parting from that sukha one day.

That, which is done is impermanent; that, which is seen is destroyed. Fruit ripens and falls. A lamp that is lit goes out. The fruit of Dharma is in the category of the *utpaadya* (that, which is produced), *sanskaarya* (connected to

subconscious impressions), *vikaarya* (subject to distortion and decay), or *aapya* (obtainable). Its power is limited and so is its fruit.

The fruit of the Bhagwat-Dharma, however, is Bhakti and *bhagavat-praapti* (obtaining Bhagwan).

Bhagwan is none of these four; nor is He *vinaashee* (subject to destruction). He is eternally with all – jada and chetan (that which lacks consciousness and that, which has consciousness) – in the form of *paramaarthā-svaarthā* (the highest goal-the greatest personal benefit). Obtaining Him is not obtaining something new; it is obtaining the Self.

Therefore, the fruit of Bhagwat-prapti is not subject to destruction. The obtaining of the saguna Bhagwan is possible by the attribute of Bhakti combined with Gnan. Bhakti is absolutely independent in obtaining the saguna Parameshwara. It does not have the slightest need for Dharma-anushtana, the practice of Yoga, or knowledge about the *nirguna* (without attributes; the Brahman).

The Poorva Mimamsa does not accept the Ishwara as the giver of fruits. The Uttar Mimamsa (Vedanta) states clearly that the Ishwara is accepted as the one who gives the fruits. A *dharmaatmaa* (one who adheres to the rules of instituted Dharma) desires Swarga and sukha as the fruit of his karmas, but a bhakta wants no fruit except Bhakti.

The fruit of all sadhans is Bhakti. Bhakti itself is the fruit, because it is from Bhakti that a person gets the *rasa* (sweet emotion; love) for Bhagwan. The rasa that does not give love for Bhagwan is bitter in the end. A bhakta considers Bhakti to be more important than even Bhagwan! Just as a virtuous woman wins over her husband by her love for him, a bhakta wins over Bhagwan by his bhakti.

From where does the capacity to win over Bhagwan come in Bhakti?

The Bhagwat-Dharma Consists of Rasa.

In their investigation of Bhakti, the Sankhyavadis (followers of the Sankhya school of thought) say that Bhakti is a natural vritti of the *Sattva-gunamayee* Prakriti (the Ishwara's power of Creation that is filled with Sattva guna, the

lofty tendency that gives peace and right thinking). According to this philosophy, this is correct. However, the vrittis of Prakriti are jada and fickle, and *parinaamee* (leading to a conclusion; ending). It is not possible for them to win over Bhagwan!

The Yogis accept Bhakti as a method for Samadhi, by using the Ishwara as a support for focusing the chitta-vritti. They also accept the importance of Ishwara-*praanidhaana* (surrendering to the Ishwara), but they believe the vritti must be blocked to attain Samadhi. The feeling of surrender is certainly an *aklishta vritti* (a feeling that does not cause agitation), but it is a vritti all the same, and all vrittis are to be sent to the point of *nirodha* (blocking). How will that vritti win over Bhagwan?

The Vedantis are called *prakriyaavaadee* because they believe in a systematic process. They say that Bhakti is when the antahkarana – itself a result of avidya – becomes *bhagavadaakaara* (takes on the form of Bhagwan). However, avidya and its effects are negated by Brahma-vidya, and the vritti of Bhakti becomes *mithyaa* (a relative truth; transient). How can such a Bhakti win over Bhagwan?

Some people say that Bhakti, too, is a special kind of ripening that arises by doing rituals of Dharma, and it is the feeling of love and attachment for Bhagwan, but that Bhakti does not have the capacity to enthrall Bhagwan.

Some say that Bhakti is a shakti of the Ishwara; but shakti cannot enslave the *shaktimaana* (Master of the shakti). Nor is it the *aalhaadini shakti* (power to delight), because the task of the alhadini shakti is to serve; not dominate.

The fact is the essence of Bhagwan's innermost alhadini shakti manifests as Bhakti. It is Radha, Bhagwan's all-in-all, filled with the essence of sweetness, who manifests in the form of Bhakti. Radha – or Bhakti – enthralls Bhagwan. It is not the fruit of Dharma, or a state of the practice of Yoga. It is the *aavirbhaava* (appearing; manifesting) of Bhagwan's self-established rasa.

The Special Characteristic of Proof in the Bhagwat-Dharma.

In Dharma the proof is *vidhi-shaashtra* (the rules of the Shastras). In Brahmagnan the proof is the Vedanta Shastra. Undoubtedly, both are the

Vedas, treasure stores of the eternal Gnan. They have kept Bhakti a secret, as a rare mystical doctrine.

Dharma was revealed by the Acharyas, Maha-Rishis. The hidden hoard of the treasure of the Vedas was revealed by Bhagwan's own *shreemukha* (auspicious mouth).

Bhagwan's copious compassion made His tender heart attain the summit of tenderness, bringing this most secret mystery of Bhakti to His tongue, and He gave its teaching.

Bhagwan Himself explained the method of obtaining Him, and that method is Bhakti.

The meaning of this is that even those who speak about Bhakti are wonderful! A person may tell us where we can possibly meet a particular person, making an estimate on the basis of the person's habits. Another person may say that he has heard that the person we want to meet will be going to a certain place at a certain time on a certain day. Yet another person may imagine where the person is likely to be. None of these is a certainty.

However, if the very person we want to meet tells us where, when and how we can meet him, we can be sure that we will, indeed, meet him.

In obtaining Bhagwan, there is no talk of flying in the air or entering into a cave, or making any public announcement. This is a meeting of lovers – of a bhakta and Bhagwan – and Bhagwan Himself gives the indication.

The special characteristic of Bhagwan's words is that whatever He says is beneficial for all creation, having goodwill for all, filling us with *chid-bhaava* (consciousness), and *aananda-bhaava* (happiness). *Bhagvad-vachana* (Bhagwan's words) are not selectively beneficial; nor is Bhagwan miserly in showering rasa. The purport is that Bhagwan's *vaanee* (speech; talk) is the *pramaana* (proof; establishing factor) in Bhakti, in which the mystical quintessence of the Vedas manifests. Thus, the special quality of Bhakti is also seen in the speaker who talks about it.

The Special Qualities of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Dharma is a form of *kriyaa* (action). It is carried out by a person who has the qualification for it. The one who carries out the rituals is a *gnaataa* (knower) of the *vidhi-vidhaana* (rules-method). The distinguishing characteristic of the Monarch Dharma is that an *aarya-purusha* (refined noble person) is that he starts praising the rule of Dharma wherever he encounters it.

The Devta that is Yoga treads softly, not wanting people to know of his efforts. People who practice Yoga seek solitude. They enter into a life of the practice of Yoga. Brahmagnan reveals itself in the heart of a person whose mind, body, and senses are tranquil, who is inclined towards contemplation, and is a seeker of the ultimate Truth.

Bhakti is like a mother who lifts up a child on to her lap, and fills him with her love. Bhakti loves the child who is *agnaanee* (does not have Gnan), *abodha* (lacks comprehensive understanding), and lacking in the capacity to do rituals more than a child who has cultivated all the good qualities needed for Dharma and Yoga.

Bhakti loves the child who sheds tears when he is lonely, is afraid, and who doesn't want Mukti (liberation), but wants only the sweet bondage of Bhagwan's love. This child even forgets his mother Bhakti, sometimes, but she pours a river of compassion over him. She sings a lullaby for the lonely child, and cleanses the mess (like a mother cleaning the baby's stool and urine) he makes. She makes successful Bhagwan's love for His bhaktas.

When Mother Bhakti sees, 'My child is smeared with impurities. He is putting his hand in fire. He is troubled by the obstacles of pride and possessiveness', she embraces him. Her love removes his impurities. She saves him from going astray. She fills his heart with laughter.

Bhakti gives Gnan to the one who lacks understanding, cleanses the sullied, and gives sukha to the suffering. She takes care of the helpless, gives an inclination for purity and a feeling of joyfulness. She quiets the crying and gives laughter to the quiet child. She has no aversion for any child. Her task is to make everyone experience her Prabhu (Master; Bhagwan).

In Dharma-anushthana there is a *pratyavaaya* (adverse reaction) in case of any mistake. In Yoga indolence of any kind becomes an obstacle to Samadhi. In

tapasyaa (asceticism) there is a *mada* (frenzy, intoxication). In *vairagya* a person disdains things that are related to Bhagwan. A learned Pundit shows disrespect to those who are not so learned. In *mauna* (vow of silence) a feeling of helplessness seeps in. A person who is proud of his Gnan does not show proper respect to newcomers on the path of Gnan. 'Oh, I knew that long ago!' he says when the newcomer speaks of some point.

Thus, almost every sadhana has obstacles of some kind. Greed for siddhis pushes Samadhi away. Under the circumstances, Bhakti is the only refuge for obtaining *kalyaana* (spiritual good fortune).

Shut your eyes and run towards Bhakti even if you have no understanding. Even if there are lapses in the order of the sadhans, there is no risk of slipping or falling on this path. Nor is there any chance of not getting the fruit.

Dharma comes before the antahkarana is purified; Tattvagnan comes after it is purified. It is Bhakti who takes care of the antahkarana while it is still impure. If it so happens that a person stops doing Dharma, if his *bhajana* (thinking lovingly about Bhagwan) is not yet ripe – or he turns away from bhajan – bhajan itself will give him support and draw him again to doing bhajan.

However, if the *bala* (strength) of the *nitya-siddha* (eternally established) Bhagwan were absent, even Dharma done by one's own strength could not give anything.

What is the reason for this?

The reason is Bhagwan, who is present in the heart of Bhakti. The Acharyas have called this the shakti of the vastu (object; Bhagwan). Bhagwan is the object of Bhakti, and His greatness is the bala of the Prabhu who is the *prame`ya* (that, which is established).

You know that if a person drinks *amrita* (the elixir of immortality) even unknowingly, he becomes immortal. A person who drinks poison unknowingly dies. Everything connected to Bhagwan is amrita. It has the *vastu-guna* (attribute of the object), and it has *bhagavat-rasa* (the sweetness of Bhagwan).

Bhagwan comes into our life knowingly or unknowingly, and makes us *bhagavanmaya* (filled with Bhagwan). Even a low-caste person bereft of

refinement gets kalyan if he gets connected to things related to Bhagwan even unknowingly.

Kubja had lust, Kansa had fear, Shishupal had hatred and Paundrak had arrogance for Shri Krishna. None of them even recognized Bhagwan, let alone have selfless loving bhakti for Him. Bhagwan's shakti is that, which remains hidden and manifests its fruit in the heart. What Dharma-anushthana had Shabari done? Bhagwan establishes Himself in different names and forms. His *guna-dharma* (His godly tendencies) never disappears.

The Basic Viewpoint of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The *saguna* (with attributes) Brahman is the *abhinna-nimitta-upaadaana kaarana* (the cause that is both the matter and the instrumental factor) of this world. That means, He becomes, and He creates this world. From Hiranyagarbha (the un-manifested consciousness in all matter) to the tiniest insect everything is a form of Bhagwan.

The *aakriti* (form), *sanskriti* (refinement), *vikriti* (distortion), *prakriti* (nature) is perceived in different forms, but there is no *bhe`da* (separateness; difference) in the Tattva (essence). The Tattva never gives up its intrinsic nature. The Sat (pure existence) is eternal, *che`tanaa* (pure consciousness) is not subject to distortion, and anand is free of objects.

Sat is *niraakaara* (without form), chit is *nirvrittika* (free of mental inclinations), and anand is *abhoga* (free of indulgences). Then, who are the forms, distortions, and indulgences that are perceived?

They are Prabhu, the cause that is both the matter and the instrumental factor of Creation. Upadan means, like the clay in the pot, and nimitta means, like the potter and the instruments he uses to make the pot. This world is like a pot and the Paramatma is the basic substance of which it is made. He is also the *kartaa-dhartaa-samharataa* (doer-sustainer-destroyer), and also the fruit of the *karma-sanskaara* (the subconscious impressions created by karmas).

The *avaidika* (those who do not believe in the Vedas) *eeshvaravaadee* (believers of the Ishwara) believe only in the formless; not in the Ishwara with form; for example, the Christians and Muslims.

In the Ishwarvadi Vaidik, there are some who do not believe the Ishwara to be with form. They are the *dvaitavaadee* – believers of duality, and the *traitavaadee* – believers of the triad; for example, the Brahma Samajis and the Arya Samajis.

All those who believe the Ishwara to be the abhinna-nimitta-upadan karana accept the Vedic Ishwara to be both sakara and nirakara. The Ishwara is the Vishva (the world). He is also the *saakshee* (witness) who is beyond the Vishva. He is the cause of the Vishva and He remains without the Vishva. He is everything, and is separate from everything.

See the world from this viewpoint. You will not need to do the *praana-pratishthaa* (invoking Bhagwan's spirit into an image for worship) anywhere. The Ishwara is present in all forms. It is only those who accept the nirakara – whether Vaidik or avaidik – who cannot accept *moorti-poojaa* (idol worship) or an Avatar. They can accept that the Paramatma is present in all, but not that everything is the Paramatma.

The followers of the Advaita (non-dual) accept everything to be the Paramatma, by using the vritti that negates everything that is not the Atma. Therefore, there is no murti-puja or Avatar in their principle.

The believers of the saguna Parameshwara accept murti-puja by the feeling of *shareera-shareeree* (the body-owner of the body), the feeling of *kaarya-kaarana* (effect-cause), and the feeling of *upaadaana-upaade`ya* (the matter of which something is made – the object that is made); and the Avatar of Prabhu who is filled with compassion for uplifting the jeeva, is also accepted.

Thus, all the principles of the Sanatana Dharma (the eternal righteousness that has no beginning and no end; the philosophy of the Vedas), methods of sadhana, and methods of worship, become compatible.

Prakriti is a Name of the Parameshwara.

This is given with absolute clarity in the Brahma Sutras. Therefore, every substance of Prakriti can be worshipped with the feeling of worshipping the Paramatma.

The Paramatma is worshipped in the form of Time, as the *e`kaadashi* (eleventh day of the lunar calendar), *poornimaa* (full moon), Shivaratri, Janamashtami, etc.

He is worshipped in the form of place at Kashi (Varanasi), Mathura, Naimisharanya, Shrirangam, etc. Their *vinyaasa* (orderly arrangement) is also accepted in the forms of Vaishvanara, Taijas, Pragna and Tureeya. Varanasi is the inner alter, and a region that grants Moksha. The same discrimination applies to all *teertha – kshe`tra* (holy places).

In objects, the Paramatma is worshipped in the Shaligram Shila (a round stone worshipped as Bhagwan Vishnu), Narmadeshwara (a stone worshipped as Bhagwan Shiva), etc. Forms, like the two-armed, four-armed, triangular etc; dark forms, fair forms, all forms of the Paramatma are eligible for worship. The earth, water, fire, air, sky, the *mana* (emotional mind), *shabda* (sound), *sparsha* (touch), *roopa* (appearance), *rasa* (flavor) *gandha* (fragrance) can all be worshipped, and experienced, as forms of the Paramatma.

The mother-father, sister-brother, girl-boy, are all forms in which the Ishwara is worshipped. A Gauri (Parvati) made of *gobara* (cow-dung), a *supaari* (beetle-nut) worshipped as Ganapati, a banyan tree as Vasudev, a cow, a horse, and even an elephant are forms of the Paramatma.

The Paramatma in All Forms.

The *vignaana* (acquired knowledge; science) of this is His being the abhinna-nimitta-upadan karana of the world. The forms that live on the ground, in water, or fly in the air are the effulgence of the Paramatma. Rama, Krishna, Matsya, Varaha and other Avatars are examples. This is the vignan of the Bhagwat-Dharma, and also its special principle. Bhagwan's puja is done in our own body and also in the sky. The entire animate and inanimate world is the form of Bhagwan. As the Atma, Bhagwan is not separate from anything. This is the Bhagwat-Dharma. There is no other Dharma that has the capacity to remove raaga-dvesha completely.

Bhagwan is worshipped in different forms, for achieving different purposes. He is worshipped in Rishis for obtaining Gnan, in Devtas for obtaining magnificence and the capacity for enjoying worldly pleasures, in ancestors for

getting sons and ensuring the continuation of the lineage and uphold traditions. It is for the same reason that *shraaddha-tarpana* (offering ablutions to ancestors) is done.

The Bhagwat-Dharma is the Sanatana Dharma. No Dharma is separate from this. This is not a Dharma started by any Acharya, at a point of time, meant for his disciples. It is for the entire creation that is made in Bhagwan.

Chapter 2.

Daan.

(Based on the writings of Parasara Madhav.)

The Vedas describe the *mahimaa* (greatness) of *daana* (charity). 'All beings praise daan. It is very difficult to do daan. Superior people find great pleasure in doing daan.'

Another Shruti says, 'Daan is the aggregate of all Yagnas. It is a *dakshinaa* (monetary gift made to a Brahmin as a duty, because Brahmins keep alive our ancient Gnan and value systems). In social interaction, every being lives in the *aashraya* (shelter; refuge) of the *daataa* (one who gives). Enemies are destroyed by daan. Daan turns enemies into friends. Everybody is distinguished in daan. This is why daan is accepted as a *parama dharma* (the highest Dharma).

The Aditya Purana says, 'There is nothing greater than daan in all the three worlds. Laxmi (the goddess of Grace and Prosperity) is obtained by daan. Swarga (Heaven) is also obtained by daan (after death). *Vidyaa* (learning) is obtained by daan and a good wife is obtained by daan. Daan is the best

method for obtaining all four Purusharthas (principle human goals) of Artha (wealth), Dharma, Kama (fulfillment of worldly desires), and Moksha (liberation from worldly concerns). It can give victory over an enemy and destroy disease.

The praise given by the Shrutis and the Smritis to daan establishes the *daanavidhi* (the right method of daan that should be done as a duty). Yagyavalkya has stated clearly that daan must be done. Something should be given every day to an eligible person. Daan should also be done on specific occasions. It should be given if asked for and given with *shraddhaa* (faith), in keeping with the capacity of the giver.

Cows, land, *til* (sesame seeds), gold, etc should be respectfully offered to suitable recipients. A person who wants the good of his Atma should not give anything to an unsuitable person. *Nitya-naimittika* (daily-on suitable occasions) daan comes in the category of the *svaroopavidhi* (the process for recognizing the Atma).

Manuji has said, 'Nitya-naimittik daan is Dharma. It should definitely be done, according to the capacity of the giver.'

Two factors are important in daan. One is that the *mana* (emotional mind) of the giver should feel satisfaction in giving. The other is that the person to whom daan is given should be a suitable recipient.

The Agni Purana's introduction on the subject of daan describes the meaningless nature of wealth. It says that the wealth that is not used for daan, or for helping other beings, or for acquiring a good reputation, or to spread Dharma is futile.

So, wealth achieved by divine Grace or personal endeavor should be used for daan. The Vishnu Dharma Purana says, 'A person who does not do daan in spite of having the capacity, goes to Narak (Hell).'

The Brahma Purana says, 'People who failed to do daan in their previous birth are the ones who now ask, "Give, give!"'

The Skanda Purana says, 'The person who comes forth to ask for daan gives us the teaching that his poverty is the fruit of his not having given daan in his previous birth.'

The hand of the giver is higher and the hand of the taker is lower. This shows what their future states will be. Anyone who obstructs daan treads on the downward path.

Maharshi Deval has described the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of daan and *tapasyaa* (asceticism) as being a duty. He starts by saying, 'When you get a suitable candidate for daan, give with shraddha. This is called daan.'

Now we will elaborate on this.

*Dve`he`tu shadadhishtaana shadangam shad vipaakayuk,
chatuh prakaaram trividham trinaadam daanamuchyate`.*

Daan has two *he`tu* (causes), six *adhishtaana* (foundations), six *anga* (parts; branches), six *vipaaka* (consequences), four *prakaara* (kinds), three *vidyaa* (knowledge; skills), and three *naada* (sounds).

We will discuss this in serial order. The fruit of the daan is not affected by the quantity of the daan.

Daan has two causes: shraddha and shakti (faith and the power to give). These give *vriddhi* (growth) and *shre`ya* (good fortune).

Daan has six foundations. Daan flowers and fruits with their support. They are: Dharma, artha, kama, *lajjaa* (feeling of shame), *harsha* (happiness), and *bhaya* (fear).

Dharma-daan is when daan is given to an eligible person without any selfish interest, for the sake of doing one's duty.

Artha daan is when money is given to get some worldly benefit.

Kama daan is when money is given in return for procuring a desired object like a woman, wine, hunting, gambling etc.

Lajja daan is when money is given out of embarrassment, fear of losing face, or for the luxury of being praised publicly.

Harsh daan is when money is given on a felicitous occasion, or someone brings good news.

Bhaya daan is money given out of fear, under threat, etc.

Daan has six points. The *daataa* (donor), the *pratigrahakartaa* (one who is eligible for accepting daan), *shraddhaa* (faith), the *de`ya padaartha* (the object that is given), *de`sha* (place) and *kaala* (time).

The daata should be a dharmatma who is not troubled by any severe illness. He should be eager to give. He should have no wrong addictions. He should be *pavitra* (pure according to the Shastras). The money he gives should be procured ethically. A donor who has these qualifications is considered a *shre`shtha* (excellent) daata.

The one who takes daan should be eligible for daan. He should be *shuddha* (pure, according to the Shastras) because of teachings from, and service rendered to his parents and Acharya (Teacher). His income should be ethical. He should be compassionate, practice self-restraint, and come from a decent family.

A person who feels happy when he sees prosperous people, is pavitra, pure-hearted, having the right kind of lifestyle, and does not look for faults in the person who asks for help. Such a person has shraddha for doing daan.

The *de`ya padaartha* (object given) should be pavitra, not obtained by unjust means. It should not be connected to any creature's suffering. It should be obtained by the person's own endeavors.

The desha and kaala that is excellent for doing daan is the one in which the daan given is not easily available. When both the giver and the taker are excellent, any place and time is suitable for daan. If the case is reversed, however, even *shre`shtha* (superior) daan becomes lowly.

From the point of the fruit, daan has six kinds, called the six *vipaaka*. They are *dushfala* (adverse fruit), *nishfala* (no fruit), *heena fala* (very poor fruit), *tulya fala* (equal fruit), *vipula fala* (abundant fruit), and *akshaya fala* (inexhaustible fruit).

Whatever is given to a *naastika* (one who does not believe in a Higher Power), thief, *himsaka* (practices violence), *jaara* (adulterator), *patita* (a depraved person), *chugalakhore* (one who carries tales with malicious intent), *bhroonaghaatee* (one who destroys a fetus) gets dushfala.

Even the most lavish daan becomes nishfala if given without shraddha. Daan given with the intention of harming someone is heen daan. Daan done in keeping with the rules of the Shastras, but the donor's mind is impure it remains a tulya daan; it gives no growth or good fortune.

If all six angas are done correctly the daan is vipul. Daan given out of compassion is akshay.

The *daivika daan-maarga* (divine paths of daan) are described as being of four kinds: *dhruva* (permanent), *ajasrika* (daily), *kaamyas* (to fulfill a desire), and *naimittika* (on some occasion).

Daan done daily is ajasrik daan. Daan done with a wish for worldly benefits – like getting a wife, son, wealth, and glory – is kamya daan. Naimittik daan is of three kinds – to make a resolve to give on a particular occasion, when something is achieved, or something obtained.

In this, too, there are three types – *uttama* (excellent), *madhyama* (moderate) and *adhama* (lowly). Uttam daan consists of donating food, education, a wife, clothes, a cow, land, gold, a horse, or an elephant.

Madhyam daan is giving blankets and medicines. Adham daan is to donate shoes, a vehicle, umbrella, utensils, a mat to sit on, etc. There are too many objects to be enumerated.

Three things are spoilt by speech – Yagna, daan and *adhyayana* (study; learning). Self-praise or remorse (for giving so much) reduces the effulgence of the daan. A person should never describe his own good deeds. The Gita mentions three kinds of daan: *saatvika* (lofty), *rajasika* (mixed) and *tamasika* (lowly), which are well known to all.

In the opinion of Yagyavalkya a person does not become eligible for daan only on the merit of his learning or being an ascetic; it is only when these qualities are combined with *sadaachaara* (a good lifestyle) that he becomes eligible.

The person most eligible to be given daan to is a *vidvaana* (person learned in the Shastras), adheres to the rules of Dharma, is tranquil, forgiving, and whose senses are restrained. He should also be a truthful person, have gratitude, and continue to study the Shastras. He should have fortitude, and he should protect cows. He should do a Yagna as a daily ritual and give daan to others, and he should be a Brahmin (because such Brahmins protect and propagate Dharma).

A *paatra* (suitable candidate) for daan is one who does *traana* (saves) from *patana* (spiritual downfall).

The Skanda Purana gives details about who daan should be given to. The best is to give daan to your Guru. After that, give daan to other Brahmins. If the Guru is no more, you should give daan to his sons, wife, grandsons, or great grandsons, or anyone of his lineage.

Daan given to a person who is not a Brahmin gives punya (spiritual merit) in equal proportion. Daan given to a Brahmin becomes doubled. Daan given to a student of the Shastras becomes fourfold, and daan given to a *vidvaana* becomes infinite.

Who is a vidvana?

A true vidvana is one who knows the beginning and dissolution of this world, birth, death and the consequences of karmas. He should know the causes of Moksha (liberation) and *bandha* (worldly bondage) – which is *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the eternal to be untrue and the transient to be true).

Punya is also won by giving daan to the father, mother, daughter, brother and friends. Daan should also be given to sisters, nephews, mother's brother, and the sons of your father's sisters if they are needy.

The *patra* closest to yourself is the best person for you to give daan to, but it brings great punya if you help people who face great suffering in the event of a war or a natural disaster.

Daan should not be given to hypocrites who hide their faults and make a show of doing *vrata* (voluntary asceticism like fasting regularly) etc, or to selfish people who display a false humility and have lowly inclinations.

A person who is paid for doing daily ritual worship professionally is called a *de`vala*. He loses his eligibility to receive daan.

Vridhdha Manu says that nothing should be given to a Brahmin who may be suitable in every other way, but spends money on the wrong kind of activities. No daan should be given to a Brahmin who does not use some of the money he gets for good purposes. Such a Brahmin is a *taskara* (thief).

Paatrabhootopi yo viprah pratigrihya pratigraham,

asatsu viniyunjeeta tasmai de`yam na kinchana.

Sanchayam kurute` yashcha pratigrihya samantatah,

dharmaartham nopayunkte` cha na tam taskaramarchaye`t.

Daan should be done sitting in your own premises. If done in another's place, you should take the permission of the owner first. If a Brahmin has taken a *brahmacharya-vrata* (vow of celibacy) and broken it, he should not be given daan.

Money earned unethically brings no merit even if given in daan. A person who does not have *sadaachara* (the right kind of habits) and learning is not eligible for giving daan to; nor is a person who is a cheat or is depraved. A person who has aroused anger in his Guru is not eligible for giving daan to either.

Physically impaired people, and people with some chronic disease, are not given daan; they are to be looked after. It is *dharma-haani* (harming Dharma) to give daan to the ineligible and deprive the eligible. In daan, whatever we have obtained rightfully is to be given to people who are qualified to receive it.

If you have a family to look after, you should not do *sarvasva daana* (give away all you have). You should ensure that your family has enough for their needs.

Daan should not create quarreling in the family. A wife and son should not be given in daan. Daan should not be promised to one and given to another. Daan should be done after keeping aside enough wealth for looking after the people who are dependent on you.

Wealth should be divided into three parts. One part is for your own use, and two parts to be used for Dharma. Life is uncertain.

If any Mahatma comes at mealtime, the family should definitely feed him, even it means their having to go hungry.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!